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LIFE OF CHRYSOSTOM.

L I F E
OF
JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,

BASED ON THE

INVESTIGATIONS OF NEANDER, BÖHRINGER,
AND OTHERS.

BY

FREDERIC M. PERTHES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

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BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN P. JEWETT AND COMPANY.

CLEVELAND, OHIO:

JEWETT, PROCTOR, AND WORTHINGTON.

NEW YORK: SHELDON, LAMPORT AND BLAKEMAN.

1854.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by
JOHN P. JEWETT & CO.
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

C A M B R I D G E :

ALLEN AND FARNHAM, STEREOTYERS AND PRINTERS.

P R E F A C E.

“THE following work,” in the words of its author, “is neither a romance nor a history in the form of a romance, but a ‘piece of biography,’ containing, therefore, good and evil intermingled, as they were developed in the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian church. To exhibit truth and facts, irrespective of the pleasure or pain they might produce, was the design of the narrator.”

The translators believe this work to be adapted in character and style to the general reader no less than to the professional scholar, and are confident that the subject itself, and the happy treatment of it by *Perthes*, will render this volume an acceptable offering to the reading public. While its pages are eminently truthful and instructive, they also breathe a catholic spirit, and contain nothing at which any Christian may justly be offended.

In translating it has been our aim to give the sense of the original in plain, intelligible English.

A few passages, mostly containing local references, have been omitted. An occasional note has also been inserted, and a closing chapter, drawn from *Paniel's History of Christian Eloquence*,¹ has been added to the original work.

This book is now sent forth to the public, with the hope that it may serve to awaken a fresh interest in the early history of the Christian church, and especially in the life and labors of one of its chiefest ornaments, well denominated by Neander, the CHRISTIAN HERO.

TRANSLATORS.

¹ Pragmatische Geschichte der christlichen Beredsamkeit und der Homiletik von den ersten Zeiten des Christenthums bis auf unsere Zeit. von Karl F. W. Paniel.

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JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.

I.

NAME AND TIME.

THE man of whom this book will treat received from his parents the name *John*. Grateful Christians called him *Chrysostom*, or “Gold-mouth,” because of the many golden words which he addressed to them. He has also been called a “saint.” To him who knows, that, in the full sense of the word, we have had but one Holy person on earth, this appellation certainly seems strange and unsuitable; but if we do not take the word in so exact a sense, if we designate by it a man of truly Christian mind and walk, we can apply it to John; for it will appear from the following history of his life, labors, and sufferings, that he was an eminently pious, Christian man.

Yet before we commence our narrative, it is necessary to describe briefly the time in which he lived. More than fifteen hundred years have passed since he labored among Christians; for he was born in the

year 347 after Christ. The first three centuries, it is known, were a period of trial for the Christian church; the heathen in the great Roman Empire soon perceived, and with ever growing clearness, what a power had arisen in the church of Christ against them, against their faith, their tastes, their life. They saw that Christianity and Paganism could not permanently exist together, that if the new religion continued, the old must cease; hence they began the warfare against that new power and maintained it for three centuries. Much blood flowed; many, many a pious Christian fell a martyr.

These calamitous times were passed when John was born. About twenty years before his birth, Constantine the Great, sovereign of the Roman Empire, united himself to the Christian church, and thenceforth persecution ceased to rage, and the church of the Lord was now before the eyes of men firmly established upon earth. There were heathen, to be sure, everywhere, in the cities and in the villages, and they were by no means friendly to the Christians; temples and altars were yet standing, and their false gods were yet served; but everywhere in the Roman Empire stood also Christian houses of worship; everywhere lived Christian communities, and now, protected by the Emperor, they could in peace and quiet perform their Divine service. In the city where Chrysostom was born, one hundred thousand inhabitants were connected with the church of Christ.

Thus far may this be called a fortunate time; but if we observe it more closely, we shall be unable to esteem it such on the whole. The prediction of the

Lord in Matt. xiii. 25, 26, had already been fulfilled; the tares had begun to spring up among the wheat. When there was no longer any danger involved in confessing Christ, some, without proper impulse of heart, suffered themselves to be baptized; when the Emperor, occupying the highest place upon earth, had adopted Christianity, and to do this brought honor and gain, thousands of the high and the low followed him, though the *heart* was unmoved. The church was filled with people who were Christians but in name; the worldliness and sin which had hitherto stood without the church, and in hostility against it, became now a power in the church itself. We shall learn from the history of John, that bad Christians were everywhere, and not merely in the palaces of the great; that wicked priests stood in the pulpit and ministered at the altar.

Besides this, Christians had not remained united in their faith, or in their statements of doctrine, but had fallen into strife. We will not attempt here to decide whether they contended about fundamental principles only, or also about secondary matters, and as if the salvation of the soul depended on them; but this we must say, that the manner and the spirit which characterized their strife, were very human, passionate, and selfish. Many by this contention lost the essence of faith, the spirit of Christianity, piety of soul. Believers, in the region where John lived, grew continually more and more corrupt; so that when Mohammed, the false prophet, appeared two hundred years later, and sought to spread his religion by fire and sword, the Christians no more, as

formerly, welcomed the martyr's crown, but forsook Christ, for whom they had no genuine love, and united themselves to Mohammed. In those very regions where Chrysostom once labored, where the first and most devout churches flourished, has Christianity disappeared, because the tares were suffered to enter; and now for many centuries the people have worshipped the God of the Turks.

At the time when that evil had begun to press with power into the church of Christ, lived Chrysostom, and *suffered*, because he strove, without fear or reserve, to withstand the advancing stream. We will now speak of him.

II.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

As already mentioned, he was born in the year 347, A. D., in Antioch. This city was in Syria, a Roman province of Asia, lying north-east of Palestine. In this city, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, a Christian church was first formed from the heathen; here Barnabas and Paul labored so long; here the name “Christians” (Acts xi. 20–30) was first applied to believers; here, finally, that earnest strife between Jewish and Gentile Christians began, which was terminated by the labors of Paul and the decision of all the apostles in Jerusalem. (Acts xv.)

Antioch was a great city, one of the four principal cities of the Roman Empire (Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch). It was more than twelve miles in circumference, and had beautiful streets, paved with slabs of marble. At an earlier period it had been the residence of the Syrian kings; now it was a populous and commercial city, in which not only traders, but also scholars and men of culture in the arts and sciences were living. Moreover, strangers from all quarters of the world here met. “People of

every land," says a scholar of Antioch, "may be found with us; and whoever takes his seat in the market-place can learn the customs of all cities." But, as often in great cities, luxury reigned here; the high gave themselves up to feasting, the low were familiar with vice; a wild rabble drove about in the city, so that Christians were not only exposed to heavy temptations, but were already infected by the prevalent wickedness. Their pastors, when faithful, had a hard and often thankless labor to perform.

Anthusa, the mother of John, belonged to the best part of the church; she was a pious and superior young woman. Soon after the birth of the child, and while in her twentieth year, she lost her husband, an officer of high rank. His name was Secundus. In consequence of hearty love to her deceased husband, and of a desire to attend with undivided mind to the education of her child, she remained a widow.

She saw in the boy a treasure committed to her by God. Henceforth the end of her life, of all which she did or forbore to do, was to train him up for God, to make of him, by Divine aid, a genuine Christian. During the first years of his life, she kept him with herself; the child enjoyed the instruction, and, what was equally important, the society of his excellent mother. When he had become a youth, and showed unusual capacities, his mother decided to give him the benefits of good learning, and put him in the school of a man named *Libanius*. This may be thought rash, for Libanius was a pagan, soul and body, and, therefore, a foe to Christianity; nay, more, he was a man who, at that time, strove and wrought

beyond any other to uphold Paganism, to exalt it on high again, and, if possible, to destroy the power of Christianity. Nor was he deficient in ability. He was a learned, shrewd, eloquent man ; he could boast that Asia, Europe, Africa, and all their islands, were filled with his scholars. The eyes of the pagan world were turned to him, and they hoped from him much aid to their cause.

Yet Anthusa placed her son in the school of this man, because, in respect to human knowledge and culture, he could receive more thorough instruction and skilful guidance than from any other teacher of that time. This, I said, may be thought perilous rashness. But Anthusa knew her son. She knew he had not merely received Christianity into his memory and his thoughts, it had taken root also in his heart and conscience ; he had experienced it as a living power in his soul, and had entered into communion with God. Hence she trusted, and had a right to trust, that words and thoughts, even the finest pleas of a man for what had no truth and no power, as the pagan faith of that age, would not injure her son. She was not mistaken. John remained in the heathen school what he had become by intercourse with his mother, a devout, believing Christian, and often thanked his mother both for the Christianity to which she led him when a child, and for the liberal culture which she afterwards procured for him in the school of Libanius.

Have all Christian mothers such courage, such firm trust in the vital power of Christianity ? There are many pious people who would fain seclude their

children from all connection with the world, that they may not be led astray by it. We have no desire to express a judgment upon their course, for not all sons of Christian parents are like Chrysostom, and youth of weak character who have never experienced to any great extent the power of religion, ought certainly to be guarded. Yet the bold action of Anthusa surely testifies of a high mind, of deep and broad views. Libanius himself, though a stranger to the mother's faith, conceived great respect for her, and once said to a friend in allusion to her: "What wives these Christians have!"

After John had studied for a series of years in the school of this man, had accumulated much knowledge and cultivated his fine gifts and talents, he resolved, under the influence of his teacher's advice, to devote himself to the law. He became an advocate. But he did not hold out long in this calling. After he had learned the wicked arts which, especially at that time, were resorted to in the practice of law, he became convinced: this is not for me; my nature and mind do not incline to it. His heart drew him to divine things, and he determined to pass over into the clerical order. In conformity with the ecclesiastical usages of that age, he must choose between entering as a monk the silent cloister, and being consecrated as a priest to active service in the church. Had he followed his inclination at this period of his life, he would have chosen the former. He longed for quiet, for retirement; but his mother, who wished to retain his society, and Meletius, bishop of the city, who knew the heart and gifts of the young man, and

hoped for a blessing to the church from his labors, moved him to self-denial, and he accepted service in the church. The bishop made him "reader." The young clergy at that time began as readers; they did not preach at once, but only read from the Holy Scriptures in the church. But a light shines, even if it is concealed. What was in the young man soon became known. Presently they wished to bring him forward and give him the office of bishop. Yet John did not suffer himself to be bribed by the honorable and splendid prospect; he believed himself too young, not ripe enough for it. He therefore rejected the offer, remained in the subordinate position of a reader, and sought to prepare himself in silence, especially by an earnest study of the Bible, for more responsible offices. For this object good assistance was afforded him.

There was living in Antioch a distinguished presbyter, Diodorus by name. He was truly pious, and, full of zeal for the cause of God among men, labored for that part of the church intrusted to his care. He went about, as Chrysostom relates, among the church members in the old city, over the Orontes, knew the individual houses and persons, and sought to arouse, edify, strengthen, or console each one according to his need. But he found time for other work, by which he effected much for the good of succeeding ages. He joined with himself a number of capable young men, for the purpose of leading them to a thorough study of the Bible. The Sacred Record was indeed read by all *Christians*, but by most of them only to be edified for the moment, to cherish

pious thoughts and feelings; by scholars also from a different motive; but among these there were many at that time who found in the Bible whatever they wished to find. Diodorus saw this, and with pain. He thought: If I read the Word of God, my wishes and inclinations must be silent. I must open my eyes and see what is written therein, and hearken to what Christ and the apostles will say. This demands a conquest of self and strenuous labor, together with learning and meditation. The knowledge, he had acquired; to the rest he applied himself. His plan was to train, in that union, a number of young men to his own views, and through them to diffuse a correct and thorough understanding of the Bible. John attached himself to this union, and, under the direction of Diodorus, obtained that clear, genuine, fundamental knowledge of the Scriptures, which distinguished him above most of his contemporaries.

And this man, who loved these serious studies and lived in them for years, we find again, perhaps to our surprise, as a lonely eremite. It appears that after the death of his mother he left the city and his office, and retired to a circle of men, who lived not far from Antioch in the stillness of a cloister. There he was blessed, and to that retirement he ever looked back with pleasure. He often spoke with visible joy of the peace of God which reigned in the life of those monks. We have, in our time, very bad accounts of cloister life; but whoever has heard the words of Chrysostom on this matter, knows at least that near Antioch there was a circle of men who strove to live before God silently and ever conscious of His pres-

ence; but whose hands were not idle nor forgetful of labor for the sake of prayer. During the four years which he passed there, Chrysostom could and did continue his study of the Bible; nor did he cease from this work when, in the fifth year, he withdrew into the perfect solitude of a grotto in the mountain. In this place he dwelt two years; in labor, but not with his hands; in conflicts, which were known only to him and to God, but which terminated in victory.¹

¹ While living with the monks, Chrysostom became acquainted with Stagirius, a young man whose experience was that of many others in his day. Born of noble parents and bred up in luxury, he left in early manhood the paternal roof and became a monk. His mother rejoiced at this step, and succeeded for a time in concealing it from his father, who was hostile to such a life. At first every thing went smoothly on with the young ascetic. But at length, owing perhaps to the sudden change in his mode of life, and the disorder of his nervous system, his mind appears to have become partially unhinged, and he believed himself a victim of demoniac possession. The outward signs of this were ringing of hands, contortion of eyes, foaming at the mouth, utterance of frightful sounds, trembling of the whole body, and a temporary state of insensibility.

Stagirius was sent, as usual, to the most venerable monks, and to chapels built over the graves of distinguished martyrs, for deliverance and peace. But all to no purpose. Spiritual remedies which had benefited so many others, were useless to him. In view of his former health and joy, this infliction seemed to be the reward of his ascetic life. He feared lest his father, on learning his state, should take revenge on all the monks. In anguish of spirit he thought of suicide, and then shuddered at this thought, as a suggestion of the demon within.

Chrysostom heard of his sad condition, and attempted to console him by a letter. Reminding him that God can make all things work together for good to His servants, and that he was now better prepared than ever before to endure the trial of great suffering, Chrysostom adds: "Since thou hast (in consequence of this affliction) given thyself to fasting, to vigils, to earnest reading of the Bible, and to constant prayer, thou hast made great progress in humility. Thou wast

Most persons have scarcely an idea of that which those men desired, of that for which they struggled with the deepest earnestness and with all their powers; but whoever feels his soul go out after Chrysostom, in view of the labors which he subsequently performed, as a genuine disciple of Christ, in his agitated life, *should* know; for the man became what he was by the work performed in that solitude.

In the sixth year, 380, he came back from his retirement to Antioch, where he was well known before, and was now received with joy into the service of the church.

previously occupied very little with the Bible, for all thy care and labor were bestowed upon the garden and its plants. I have heard that you were accused of pride by many, who attributed it to the nobility of your parentage, the dignity of your father, and an education in the midst of wealth." Pride and envy were not, then, extinct among the good monks in the vicinity of Antioch. Alas, there is reason to believe, that ascetic severities have much oftener injured the body than purified the soul of him who practices them. It is gratifying, however, to record the opinion of Chrysostom, that the evil spirit which had taken possession of his friend, was simply mental depression or melancholy. — TRS.

III.

CHRYSSOSTOM AS PRESBYTER AT ANTIOCH.

386—398.

THE bishop Meletius gave him the office of deacon, which required of him only subordinate services ; but his successor, *Flavianus*, six years later, 386, made him a presbyter. He now came forward as a preacher in the city. The presbyters were assistants of the bishop, and were employed by him ; one mainly as a pastor, another as a preacher, according to their various gifts. The rare abilities of John led the bishop not only to place him in the pulpit oftener than the other presbyters, but also to yield, in his own person, the precedence to Chrysostom. His conduct does him honor. John appears soon to have become the preacher of the church, and to have continued such twelve years.

This time passed, on the whole, quietly by ; I mean without extraordinary events. He had not, to be sure, unmingled joy and satisfaction in his office. In such a city as Antioch, and with a large church, many a grief, many a painful experience, many a sharp conflict, must be endured ; but this is only the

lot of every clergyman who is earnest to do the work of his office; it may not be otherwise on earth. But aside from this, these twelve years, as a whole, went quietly past. John, who now became "Chrysostom," stood in his pulpit, and scattered the seed of God's Word. And not without a blessing; for the members of the church were present in large numbers, heard him with pleasure, and often received deep impressions from his discourse. We hear of many a sermon which he delivered during this period, and of its effects. Many of his addresses have been preserved for us, and are within the reach of those who desire to peruse them.

A few extracts will here be in place. I select for this purpose the homilies which he delivered through a series of weeks in Lent of the year 387. They were occasioned by an event of serious import to the city and to him.

The reigning Emperor, Theodosius the Great, had laid upon the city of Antioch an impost which, notwithstanding her wealth, was very large and oppressive. The Governor and his officers attempted to collect it. This excited displeasure, and the hard, rough way in which the officers proceeded, put the whole city in commotion: the great murmured, and the lower classes ran together in the streets and market-place. Still they might perhaps have submitted and become quiet again, had there not been in the city a party of men, who, free from the higher restraints of conscience, asked not for law or order, and had nothing to lose, but eagerly sought for gain, and therefore availed themselves with joy of occa-

sions to excite disturbance and alarm, that they might fish in the troubled waters. They were mostly residents from abroad, who had been driven from home for evil conduct, or had left, because, unwilling to earn their bread in a respectable employment, they hoped to acquire money in the great city. Here, in the theatre and upon the numerous play grounds, they were at home, and were often hired by the comedians and female dancers to applaud them by clapping. Moreover, high officers, who had not the love of the people, but who coveted applause, gave the men in question money for crying “hurrah” at the right time, and for leading the populace to do the same. Thus Chrysostom describes them, warning the church of their character. And Libanius expresses himself to the same effect concerning them. He supposes there were four hundred fellows of this sort in the city, and says: The dancers are dearer to them than sun, moon, and stars. Nothing is so holy to them as the theatre; and never till they are driven out of the city shall we have rest, security, and peace. To these venal men the alarm in Antioch was right welcome. They spread themselves through the city, excited the people more and more, and led them to assemble in wild tumult before the castle of the Governor, for the purpose of compelling him to cease the exactation of the money. But as he would not and could not accede to their demand, they rushed furiously to the market-place, tore down the statues of the Emperor, Empress, and princes, trampled them underfoot, and sung satirical and abusive songs over them. Then they sought the dwellings of the great,

who would not join their riotous movement, and set them on fire. One of the palaces was already in flames, when, at the Governor's command, soldiers marched up, quickly scattered the people, and restored quiet to the city.

The authorities also discharged their duty, by seizing several ringleaders of the riot and punishing them. They then sent couriers to Constantinople, to acquaint the Emperor with the affair, and to receive further commands. The fear and distress were now equal to the noise and rage. Theodosius was not an evil man, but he was very passionate. Such a rising against the Emperor and abuse of his statues was deemed, especially at that time, the worst of crimes; and it was naturally feared—there were examples of the kind—that the Emperor, in his first wrath, might give command to lay the city in ashes. Antioch quickly assumed another aspect. Gaming-houses and pleasure-grounds were unvisited, the baths were empty, the great and the rich were packing up their goods for removal to a place of safety, students left for home, and upon the markets and streets the customary crowd failed; all was still as death, for every one sat speechless at home, awaiting with fear the things which were to come.

John Chrysostom sat also at home, but with other thoughts than most of the inhabitants. He hoped from this event a blessing to the hearts of the people, and he meditated how to employ the occasion and terror for their best good.

He permitted seven days to pass before he ascended the pulpit, in order, first, to press the event home to

their consciences, and then, lead them to peace, that their ears might be able to hear. After this delay he took up his discourse in his church crowded with hearers.

Lent was at hand; and on the Sunday before the outbreak he had spoken in a remarkable manner to the church of the pernicious influence which those bands of restless and reckless men exercised, and had closed his sermon with these words: “I desire of you one expression of thanks for the discourse, namely, that you reduce to order the blasphemers of God in this city. May the Jews and heathen of Antioch find in you, who are Christians, their deliverers. Think not there is danger in putting your hand on these men,—there will be no advantage in making them your enemies. There was no advantage in having Herod for an enemy, and yet John the Baptist testified against him. And if you suffer for it, you will suffer, like John, as martyrs for truth and right. And let no one utter the cold, heartless words, How does it concern me? what have I to do with these men? I have an interest in every man. Have not all men the same nature as yourself, the same Lord, the same Divine law over them? If you who are present would divide among yourselves this care for the city’s welfare, Antioch would surely perceive the power of your action. In number the smallest part of the inhabitants, but in heart the best, I say to you: *One man, glowing with holy zeal, is able to change a whole city.*”

A few days after he had thus spoken, the wild outbreak described above was occasioned by those

men. When now Chrysostom ascended the pulpit again, he reminded them of what they had last heard, and said: "I believe that I spoke not those words of myself, but God, who sees into the future, put them in my heart. Had we punished the blasphemers, what has now happened would not have taken place. These people are to blame for our present fear. Had we removed them before, or reduced them to quiet, we should not now need to tremble. I well know, that from early times good morals have prevailed in our city; but alien and profligate men, above all law, have corrupted us. You have suffered their ungodly conduct, and God also has now suffered the Emperor to be vilified, that we may be punished for our indifference."

When he uttered these words there was a movement in the audience. They nodded approval, "he is right," and some clapped their hands in applause, according to the custom of the time. Then Chrysostom raised his voice: "How does your applause help me? It will be the right approval if you practice in life what I say to you. The church is no theatre, where men listen for their own pleasure." Yet he did not reprove merely, he sought to restore courage to their terrified spirits.

"A Christian," said he, "must be distinguished from the heathen by enduring all courageously. Filled with the hope of future blessings, he must be raised above the assault of temporal sufferings. The believer stands upon a rock; hence the floods cannot overthrow him. Let us take heart, for God cares for us more than we care for ourselves."

In the same discourse, he turned to the rich men of the city, and said:—

“ Of what profit to you now are your gorgeous palaces? You leave them to flee away. How does your gold assist you? If gold cannot help you against the anger of a man, how much less will it aid you against the wrath of Him who needs no gold! What do you have from it? A double burden and vexation. The poor man is soon equipped and ready; you go about and seek and seek for one with whom your moneys may be preserved secure.”

Meanwhile, that every possible effort might be made to save the city, the venerable bishop Flavian, though old and sickly, and though his sister lay at the point of death, set out for the court, to intercede with the Emperor. When Chrysostom ascended the chancel on the next Sabbath, he related this to the church, and said:—

“ As the bishop has heard from his Saviour, that a good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep, he has gone to give his life for us all, if it must be. It has not been easy for him to make the journey. He is very aged, weak in body, the season is rough, the approaching Lent properly calls for his presence here, and his only sister, lying sick unto death, would fain have held her brother to her bedside. But he tore himself away, and the desire to help us has given to his old age the spirit of youth. He thought: Christ has given Himself for us; and what can be our excuse, if we, to whom so large a church has been committed, are not ready to do all for her safety? God in heaven will not overlook such love; He will

not permit His servant to return without the fulfilment of his desire. His appearance, merely, will soften the wrath of the pious Emperor,—the countenance of holy men is full of spiritual power,—and he knows how to speak. He will say to the Emperor, as Moses once said: Forgive them their trespass, or else, slay me with them. He will remind him of Christ the Lord, who, in these weeks of fasting, purchased forgiveness for the sin of the whole world; and of that parable of the servant owing ten thousand talents and exacting the hundred pence. I know the courage of our father. He will say to the Emperor: “Beware lest you hear from the Lord on that day,—Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt; shouldest thou not also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?” We have a good bishop and no bad Emperor; thus upon both sides there is hope. But let us trust in God more than in both of them; for He will stand between them, inspire the bishop’s discourse, and soften the Emperor’s heart. Let us go to our Father for help; let us cry also unto God! United prayer availeth much, if it is earnest. We need not journey beyond the sea; each one of us, man and woman, can here in the church, and also at home, cry unto God, and God—O assuredly, He will hear us.”

He then shows them, that the sad revolt in connection with the time of Lent, in which it took place, had already brought them many a blessing:—

“The market is empty, but the church is full. While we must search, as in a desert, after men upon the streets of the city, we find here no place for the

multitude of hearers. As seamen in a furious storm seek the harbor, so the storm, which has fallen upon our city, drives all, from every side, together into the church, and here unites us all, as members, by the bond of love. We rejoice to see one another here in the danger, to weep and pray together, and daily to hear the Divine Word; quickened, encouraged, strengthened, we return to our homes.

“ Let us not lament over the danger which has befallen us, but thank God that He has awakened us once more from our languid and slothful, fickle and wandering mind, to deep earnestness! How many times heretofore have I admonished men to leave the theatre and dissolute plays, and not to amuse themselves with unseemly dances. But I could not reach the object with my words; when songs of praise resounded here, the wild cry of mirth echoed there. But now, of their own accord, they leave those places, dissolute songs are no more heard, even the workshops are deserted, labor rests, our whole city seems to be a church.

“ Let us thank God, but—let us continue on the way which we have taken; let us beware, lest, when the storm is past, we again cease to pray! Of what use is it, for one who has become sick by a disorderly life, to live temperately three or four days, but then fall back into his old course? In those days, when the earth quaked, or famine threatened, you once before paused for a time. Let us now *persevere* in the direction we have taken, that God may not be compelled to bring a worse thing upon us.

“ Now you are daily in the church, but truly we go

not into the church merely for the sake of being present, but in order to bear home treasures from this place. We sin by going empty away from the house of God. Therefore, when you go home, let the friend bear somewhat to his friend, the father to his children, the masters to their slaves. From the garden and the forest we bring flowers and branches to our friends, from banquets the mother brings dainties to her children ; and shall we return empty from the house of God to our families ? ”

With the first information of what had taken place in Antioch, and before bishop Flavian had arrived in Constantinople, the Emperor had sent two officers, Cæsarius and Hellebichus, to make the sharpest examination, and to detect and punish the guilty. These two judges appeared in the city, and, according to the custom of that age, applied the torture, in order to force those concerned to confess their own guilt and that of their associates. Great and small, men from the common people and from the most illustrious families, were brought in chains to the hall of judgment. Upon the space before the hall stood wives, children, and friends, weeping and lamenting, to hear what would become of those dearest to them.

There was great sorrow in the city, when one morning a number of monks, who living in seclusion near Antioch had heard of the calamity, came into the city, and, just when the high lords were riding back to the hall of justice, placed themselves in their way. One of them, *Macedonius*, who had been hitherto unknown among men, who had no human greatness, who could not even read, but who, by

silent communion with God, had become strong and courageous, and possessed a heart full of genuine love,—this man seized the horse of the judges by the bridle, and summoned them to alight. His word, the spiritual power in it, was effectual, and they alighted. Then said Macedonius:—

“Sirs, say to your lord, that he is not merely an emperor, he is also a man, and rules over his fellows. Human nature is made after the image of God, and he ought not so unmercifully and cruelly to destroy God’s image; he provokes God by misusing His image. Your master will punish because his statue of brass is dishonored; but what is the statue compared with the image of the living God? Statues of brass he can easily cause to be replaced; but he is unable to restore a hair of his head to the murdered man.”

These words were decisive. The judges, who knew the Emperor’s heart as a heart not indifferent to God, laid down the sword of judgment, and promised to lay before their master the address of the monks, and to await new commands.¹

¹ Whoever has been accustomed to see in judicial forms the highest equity, will take offence at the bold demand of the eremite, and still more at the ready compliance of the imperial officers, especially if he is not intimately acquainted with the position of monks at that time. But let one call to mind the “grace of the prince,” which even now stands confessedly above the sentence of a judge bound to the law, and also the prophets of the Old Testament, who rebuked princes by authority from God and without any commission from man. In the time of Chrysostom, we know, that eminent monks held a similar rank in the Christian world. It appeared to no one an arbitrary assumption, if they, in the spirit of a higher, heavenly order of things, reminded

The affair had made a deep impression on all the inhabitants. It had gone to the heart of Chrysostom also, and the next day he poured out the fulness of his soul before the church.

“The rich lords,” he said among other things, “the first men of the city, the members of our council, who at other times were of so much consequence with our Emperor,—they left their houses, and thought only of finding safety for themselves and their property. But these monks, poor men, having nothing but their rough garment, men without culture and hitherto unnoticed, holding intercourse with trees and mountains and rocks alone,—these hasten to us in our necessity, without hesitation or fear, and have power and energy of spirit to quell in a few moments the threatening storm;—and then they go softly back, as if they had done nothing, and without desiring any thanks, into their silent dwelling.”

In the following days, Chrysostom had many a serious and sharp word to speak, for scarcely had hope revived in consequence of this event, when the old disposition was again active. Men complained of stillness in the city; the theatre and bathing houses ought again to be opened; and when this was not done, they murmured. I pause in the account—men are everywhere alike—and hasten to the conclusion.

It happened as Chrysostom predicted. Bishop Flavian was successful in his plea with the Emperor.

rulers who were in danger of being conquered by human passion, with emphasis and earnestness, of the Divine law of love and mercy.

As Lent approached, Theodosius had sent a letter into all the provinces, giving liberty to many who had been imprisoned for this or that crime, and at the end of this letter he had said: “*O, that I might recall to life the executed.*” Flavian reminded him of this, and not in vain. Theodosius answered him: “What great thing is it, then, if we who are mere men restrain our anger, when the Lord of the world, who for our sakes took the form of a servant, prayed for those who nailed Him to the cross: ‘Father, forgive them!’ Ought I not then to forgive my fellow-servants?”

Theodosius wrote a letter to Antioch, in which he declared that all which had taken place was pardoned and forgotten. With this, Flavian hastened from the court, in order to reach home with the joyful message in time for the festival. On the morning of Easter, Chrysostom was able to begin from his pulpit:—

“I will commence to-day with the words, with which I was wont to begin in the time of danger: Say with me, Praised be God! who enables us this day to celebrate our festival with so light and joyful a heart. Praised be God! who does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.”

IV.

CALL TO THE CAPITOL.

398.

In the spirit exhibited by the foregoing description Chrysostom had labored twelve years in Antioch; and, had it depended on his own pleasure, he would not have left his office in this city. He enjoyed the love of his church, general respect in the city, and the entire confidence of his bishop Flavian. He was not without influence upon the community as a whole, and a rich blessing proceeded from him to individual susceptible hearts. This is as much as a preacher of Christ may expect for himself upon earth.

But God had determined otherwise respecting him. He was to enter a greater sphere of action and cultivate a still more important field. Such a man was to be used, and was worthy of being led by God into another and less delightful school; I mean the school of suffering. He could endure the fire in which God is accustomed to purify and perfect, as gold in a furnace, the noblest spirits. Chrysostom was called to Constantinople as first bishop. He rose high, but

whoever stands very high can fall very low. This John experienced.

I said, *God* had determined otherwise respecting him. But if we look merely at the manner in which he was removed from Antioch to the capital, the expression may seem unsuitable; for this call to the court came in a way altogether human. *Eutropius*, a favorite of the Emperor and his first minister, of whom we shall yet hear remarkable things, was the man who principally urged this call. For in passing through Antioch this man had repeatedly heard Chrysostom preach, and had been charmed with him. But it was only the beautiful way in which he spoke, it was only the eloquence, which pleased him; in the teaching, in the truth, Eutropius took no pleasure, and as little in the spirit, in the earnest, holy love, by which John was inspired. He thought: "the presbyter in Antioch is a fine orator, we must bring him into the capital." The Emperor and his wife, to whom he proposed the matter, assented, and the city was very well satisfied, for Chrysostom had already won a name. But when it was ascertained that the church in Antioch was strongly attached to her pastor, and observed that a man of his spirit would hardly have any great inclination to be transferred to the residence of the court, they used craft and force,—to which, indeed, the great lords of the capital were much accustomed. Under some pretext he was led quietly from the city to a neighboring farm, where two messengers of the Emperor were waiting with a carriage, into which he was placed, and then, without regard to the wish and will of

preacher or church, he was carried to Constantinople.

This evidently is all very human, and nothing is to be seen of God's hand in it. But this, indeed, is not generally to be seen, not even where, as the result shows, it has surely been at work. The sale of Joseph and his removal into Egypt was altogether a human transaction; and yet Joseph was certainly right, when surveying the whole course of his life he said, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." Six years after he became bishop of Constantinople, Chrysostom fell into the deepest suffering, and without being relieved therefrom, as Joseph died; but his last word was, Praised be God for all!

Let us not, however, anticipate, but proceed with our narrative. Yet before we describe the labor of Chrysostom in the capital, we must become more familiar with the soil which he was there to cultivate.

V.

THE RESIDENCE.

THEODOSIUS the Great, of whom we have heard in our account, died in the year 395. He was the last Emperor who, by his strong hand, held together the Roman Empire, which embraced a great part of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Before his death he divided it between his two sons. To *Honorius*, the younger, he gave the western part,—Italy, Spain, Gaul, etc.; to *Arcadius*, the elder, he assigned the eastern part,—Greece, Asia Minor, etc., with the capital and residence, Constantinople. Both were still young, the former eleven and the latter eighteen years old. He therefore placed older men at their side, as guardians and regents or first ministers. Honorius, in the West, was under the direction of a brave general, *Stilicho* by name; Arcadius received for his guide a sly, artful man, named *Rufinus*. The young Emperors were not gifted by nature, were without force, and had been moreover unwisely educated, so that nothing came of them. They fell into the power of their ministers and remained there. Both these men were covetous and ambitious, therefore jealous

of each other, and very soon a contest began between them, in which Rufinus perished. Stilicho had married the sister of the deceased Theodosius. Envious of this distinction, Rufinus resolved to marry his daughter to the Emperor Arcadius. Having prepared him for it, he hoped soon to accomplish his purpose, when he excited the dissatisfaction of Arcadius. He had recommended to him a certain Lucian for an important office in Antioch; but as this man did not prove suitable for it, the Emperor became very much displeased with his minister. In order to make good his error, he made haste—the unscrupulous man—to Antioch, caused Lucian to be taken prisoner and scourged to death on the night of his arrival, and then returned swiftly, hoping with the narrative of this deed to suppress the Emperor's wrath, and then proceed to the marriage. When he returned, all was festivity in Constantinople, the whole city was in motion, the Emperor was about to take his bride. The daughter of Rufinus was commonly supposed to be the person, and he gave himself up to hope, but was suddenly and terribly undeceived.

For the time of his absence had been shrewdly improved by the above-mentioned Eutropius. This man, having from a low position already risen high, would fain ascend yet further, and determined to dislodge Rufinus, and take his place. The intended marriage of the Emperor with the daughter of his minister did not suit the purposes of Eutropius. He plotted against it secretly and gained the passions of the Emperor for a young, beautiful, orphan maiden, *Eudoxia*, the daughter of a deceased general. She

was an enemy of Rufinus, because he had effected the murder of her guardian. Should she become Empress, the minister would fall, as Eutropius hoped. The plan was successful, and until the day of marriage the person of the bride was kept a secret. The whole court, led by Eutropius, passed in grand procession through the streets, attended and followed by thousands of the city, while rich gifts were carried before, destined, it was generally supposed, for the daughter of Rufinus; but contrary to all expectation Eutropius turned in before the house of Eudoxia. The gifts were brought to her, and she was led as Empress into the palace.

Rufinus stifled his anger, feigned indifference to the losing game, and only studied to maintain his power in spite of the Empress and Eutropius. But in vain. Eutropius secretly united with Stilicho, and they determined to remove their enemy from the world. One day when a regiment of soldiers, which Stilicho had sent over to Constantinople, were publicly received, and Rufinus riding with the Emperor directed them to march by, they, in obedience to a secret command, fell upon and murdered him, and before the face of the Emperor dragged him away to the open market-place.

Eutropius took his place, was at the goal of his own wishes and triumphed. He little imagined on that day how soon the avenging hand of the Almighty would cast him down. We shall hear.

Although these events took place several years before the appearance of Chrysostom in the capital, I have given so full an account of them, because they

reveal to us the dreadful state of the court and men in authority, and likewise that of the people ruled by them; rulers and subjects were both strictly united, working reciprocally upon each other. In a land where the high officers are permitted thus *openly* or with *impunity* to commit murder; and worse, where they practise such scandals as have met us in the history of a single marriage, where a man like Eutropius, mocked by the first ministers and treated without respect by the inhabitants of the city, can venture to involve the person of his prince in his game of intrigue, there must the people be in a sad condition.

When the intrigues and crimes of the great do not shun the nation's eye, there must be wanting in the people moral judgment and conscience, without which no state can long exist. If the moral spirit lives in a people, it exercises, even without periodicals and courts, a power before which the worst of men will bow, or at least be in fear. An immoral government cannot sustain itself permanently over a moral people. Complaint respecting rulers is therefore always a charge of the nation against itself. The course of our narrative will confirm this statement.

It was all over with the population of the Roman Empire, and hence the state approached its dissolution. It had existed above a thousand years, and had once been mighty by the moral earnestness no less than the natural force of its people. But for several centuries the old Roman spirit had been wanting. Christianity was given it at the right time, and many thousand individual souls had been rescued, but the Roman people as a body had not been transformed.

Princes to be sure were baptized, and the faith of Christians became dominant; but outwardly alone in the majority of rulers as well as subjects. They had it in the head, prated about it, were zealous for it with human passion, but their heart remained far from it. They became more and more corrupt and were ripe for the judgment of God. It did not tarry.

A new race of men had come from the East, the German tribes. When Chrysostom came to Constantinople, they lay on all the borders of the empire, and in some cases had passed over them. Eighty years after they swept over Italy as a flood, and cast down the last remnants of the decayed state. The government in Constantinople, indeed, yet continued several hundred years, but one province after another was lost, until the Turks made an end to its miserable existence, and as before said, all the tribes became Mohammedans.

Chrysostom now entered into the capital of this sinking empire, into the midst of this frivolous population, into proximity to the corrupt court. When he had arrived, and was about to be installed in his office, obstacles were forthwith placed in his way. The people and many of the clergy in the city were in favor of the distinguished orator, but eminent bishops from abroad had been invited by the Emperor to heighten the splendor of the holy ceremony, and among these, the bishop of Alexandria, the third capital of the Roman Empire. His name was *Theophilus*; we will mark it, for we shall meet him yet again at a later period. He plays an important part in the his-

tory of Chrysostom's life. He was a man of gifts, discreet and active as Chrysostom, but otherwise exactly the opposite of him.

Displeased because he had not at least been consulted in the choice of a new bishop for the residence, he was yet more offended because John of Antioch had been chosen; for this man was not to his mind, was not one from whom he could expect coöperation and support in his schemes at court. Even now he hoped to prevent Chrysostom's induction into office, and had brought with him one of his creatures, a certain Isodora, whom he thought to push into the place. It belonged to Theophilus, as the most eminent of those present, to consecrate the bishop elect; but he refused to do this, and laid a protest before Eutropius, under the pretence that evil reports were in circulation against Chrysostom. But Eutropius knew the Egyptian bishop, and laid before him certain papers, which contained,—not reports but facts concerning him. When he saw these, he paused and — was ready to ordain Chrysostom. The ceremony was performed on the 28th of February in the year 398 A. D.

It deserves here to be remarked, that Chrysostom not only without resentment offered the hand of reconciliation to his enemy, but immediately invited him to participate in effecting a good work, which he had long had at heart. The church of the East and that of the West had fallen into strife and division respecting the choice of an ecclesiastic. John now said to Theophilus: Let us unite our hands to reconcile this difference. Success followed. They sent messengers

to Rome, and as a result of the negotiations peace was restored.

But now to the matter in hand, a representation of the life, the discourses, the acts, and the sufferings of Chrysostom as bishop of the capital.

VI.

CHRYSSOTOM AS PATRIARCH.

He had taken a high office. After the Roman, he was the most important bishop in Christendom. He was not only the first preacher for the court, but as superior bishop, or patriarch, to use a later designation, he had the oversight and guidance of the church in large regions of Europe and Asia. Twenty-eight bishops, with hundreds of the inferior clergy, were under his supervision. Such an office always brings its peculiar labors, cares, and burdens, but then and there it brought an unwonted amount of these. Many, very many of the clergy subordinated to him were not what they should be. His predecessor, Nectarius, had not wisely cared for his flock. Previously an officer of state, and seduced perhaps to accept the high post by a desire for the honor and revenues connected with it, he hardly possessed the capacities and the mind required for a good bishop.

Hence under him many were put into the clerical office who could be of no use there, nor was there any proper oversight and guidance of those already in that office. Chrysostom to be sure found men

also, who were like-minded with himself, or who could be guided by him and brought to share his sentiments; and these clung to him with great love and veneration, supported him in his labors and remained true to him in misfortune and death, because they were conscious of the debt they owed to him and his influence. But a great number of men, those who were indifferent, or evil or exceedingly wicked in heart, caused him much sorrow and many a sleepless night, during the years which passed before they succeeded in working his overthrow. On one occasion, weighed down by the painful circumstances in which he was placed by these men, he said with a sigh:—

“ How hard it is to find the right, and not to mistake on the one side or the other! An unworthy ecclesiastic ought not to remain in office;—with entire equity and according to my own inclination, I should at once remove him. But what now if there exist no judicial ground for the act? — Then he must remain in office;—but I thus permit what, properly, as superior bishop, I ought not to permit. What then? Should I at least prevent his rising to a higher office? But the church will then perceive that I do not respect their spiritual guide,—this is bad; but to let him advance higher, that is yet worse.”

And at the present day many, who fill subordinate places, look upon higher posts as very inviting, and presume a minister or consistorial adviser able to do as he pleases. If they but imagined all which fatigues the head and weighs upon the heart of such

an officer, their envy and fault-finding would cease. They would no longer blame one of these functionaries for doing that which, in their opinion, he ought not to do, nor for omitting that which they presume he ought to perform, but which he, from his position, perceives should not be done.

“Truly,” says Chrysostom, “whoever will not trouble himself about his office, who does not feel the duties of it even as a burden, he may well have good days; but to him who longs for the salvation of the church, who watches over the souls of his flock—!! If thou couldst know how we must bear the burdens of all, how no one will pardon us for anger, no one find an excuse for us when we err, thou wouldst think otherwise of our position. We are like a city “set on an hill,” exposed to the judgment of all, wise and foolish. We are surrounded by the envious and the hostile, and are tortured day and night. Whoever has to oversee a dozen boys in his house, though they are wholly dependent upon him, feels to some extent the difficulty of his task; but how different is it, if we are called to guide men, not in our own house, and each one of whom feels his importance as a man and hesitates whether to follow or not.”

Meanwhile Chrysostom did not satisfy himself with sighs and complaints, he must and did act with vigor. At a later period, as we shall hear, he deposed a whole circle of bishops; and in the first years of his office he proceeded energetically against men who had clearly been guilty of serious transgressions. This naturally stirred up evil blood both in them and

in all their adherents. He had at the outset and by less important matters awakened dissatisfaction. The entire Chrysostom, his spirit and his way of life, gave offence to many of the clergy. Let us hear something of it.

The beautiful custom of having Divine service on weekdays, as well as the Sabbath, prevailed in Constantinople. A formal sermon was not always delivered, the hour was sacred to prayer and devotion. The churches were daily opened, there was singing, the preacher made a short address, and offered prayer to God in the name of all. This custom might well be revived among us. The churches ought daily to be thrown open, that whoever is moved by his heart to pray, and has at home no place, quiet, or silence, may sit down here for a half hour, be with God, and in the consecrated place where man is attracted to God, draw down from Him Divine grace. This was the usage in Constantinople, and the clergy led the devotions. But it was found that few besides women took part in this worship, and very naturally, for the men were too busy during the day. Hence the new bishop appointed an hour of prayer also in the night, when labor was done, and this seemed wholly right to many an earnest man, who esteemed it a privilege after the toil and perplexity of the day to meet in the church. But not all the clergy of the city were satisfied. They were too indolent to resort with pleasure again at an unwonted hour into the church, and were furious at their new superior, who did not leave the old order undisturbed.

Further: the bishop of the capital had large rev-

venues; and his predecessor had expended much in his style of living. Soon after entering upon his office Chrysostom made an inventory of the household expenses, struck off a large sum which had been paid for unnecessary articles, and appropriated it to the erection of a hospital for strangers, who were taken sick in the capital and were unable to provide for themselves. Hence arose gradually large and noble establishments, in which for decades after, many a poor sick man was taken care of and recovered his health. In this spirit Chrysostom acted everywhere, and desired the servants of the church to proceed in the same way. Yet he gave his clergy no reason to be offended; where it was right he took them under his protection. He demanded for them a respectable salary, that, devoid of care for the support and wants of the body, they might give themselves with undivided solicitude to their office. With reference to this he once said from the pulpit:—

“ Those who build splendid houses and possess great estates never think they have enough; but if an ecclesiastic for once has a good dress or keeps a servant, so as not to be compelled to wash his own garments, there are those among the rich who esteem it unbecoming luxury.”

But Chrysostom lived himself, and desired his clergy to live, as became their holy calling. Hitherto, however, the higher ecclesiastics had there played a part in the great world and in the court. They enjoyed high consideration in the capital. Bishops from the provinces were accustomed therefore to spend much time in this city, in order to taste the

pleasures of high life. Chrysostom once said in a sermon :—

“ The heads of government enjoy no such honor as do the overseers of the church. Who is first, if he appears at the court, or enters a social circle of the great, or of ladies ? No one takes rank before them.”

They were welcomed and desired to be present at great social gatherings, and were expected to hold such in their own houses, not without splendor and expense. This now was not for Chrysostom. When he was not occupied abroad in the duties of his office, either in the church, or with the sick, or among the prisoners, he lived a retired life at home. He took but a simple meal. This was necessary in view of his health. For he had not a strong nature ; his body was small and slender, at an early age his head was bald and his cheeks sunken, he suffered much and seriously by indigestion and pain in the chest. “ I have a cobweb body,” he said in sport. Hence he observed great simplicity ; he lived but for his calling, his God, and his books. This excited displeasure. The example of such a life in the patriarch cast no favorable light upon the clergy who proceeded otherwise. They must be ashamed of their worldly conduct. But since they had no wish to change, they were offended and embittered against the man, whose holy light cast them into the shade. We shall hear by and by what sort of charges proceeded thence against the bishop ; but we will now study his relation to, and his activity in, the *church* of the capital.

VII.

CHRYSOSTOM AS PREACHER IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

It may occasion surprise, if I say, his relation to the church of the capital was and remained, on the whole, a pleasant one. He won and retained the love of the majority. Had not many of the great been unfriendly to him, and many of the clergy embittered against him, had not the Empress and especially Theophilus been there, he would have labored longer than six years in quiet and prosperity. This may occasion surprise, I say, for the church was such as it was, and Chrysostom uttered to it the truth, in love, yet plainly and sharply. And here again is the experience confirmed, that the mass of mankind, though rough and to a certain extent corrupted, feel, when not misled by the wicked and crafty, the nobleness of a pure and devout man who lives in self-sacrificing love for them, and conceive a confidence and affection for him, which are not permanently disturbed even by earnest and severe treatment on his part. The mass of mankind are in this respect like children ; whoever loves them, possesses and retains their love in return, even when he is com-

elled to punish them. And thus, like an earnest and conscientious, yet loving father, John lived and labored among the members of his church. We must add to this the power of his spirit and of his eloquence, by which he governed the heads and hearts of his hearers, and by which, when it was desirable, I may well say, he knew how to make overpowering impressions. He had passed with his congregation through exciting scenes in the city and in the church; and while they had received much from him, they knew and could not forget what a treasure they possessed in him.

In the following extracts we may clearly see them in their by no means prosperous condition, and may also learn the way in which their preacher addressed them.

What he thought of the church of his time in general, he once clearly and distinctly said in these few words :—

“I see the church lying as a dead body ; in it we discern the form of man, but only the form, not the man himself. Thus all the members of the church are believers ; their thoughts have the form of belief, but the life is wanting. We have suffered the power and warmth of life to escape from our faith.”

This seems harsh, but can we say it was not so, if what we learn from the following is true ?

“The rich lords and rich ladies,” he said from his pulpit, “come hither, and think not of hearing the Word of God, but of showing themselves, how they shall sit down with the greatest display, surpass each other in magnificence of dress, and attract attention

by their looks and gait. The lady thinks, ‘ Has this and that person seen and admired me? Is my dress becoming? Are its folds disarranged?’ Then comes the man with many slaves, who clear the way for him. When he has taken his seat, his thoughts wander to his business or his money, that which occupies him without, does not leave him here. And yet such persons verily believe they are conferring a favor upon us, the church, and even God the Lord, by their presence. Can they be helped in this place? Should one go to the house of a physician and instead of listening to his advice and receiving the medicine, allow his thoughts to be on his dress or his money, could he receive any benefit from the physician? The people seem not even to suspect that it is the house of God into which they enter, they feel no longing, no need of drawing near to God, when they are here!”

Another day he said:—

“ A fearful disease prevails in our church. We should here speak with God the Lord, should be here in order to worship Him; instead of this our thoughts wander away, dissipated and vain. And more than this, we disturb those near us, take our neighbor aside, and treat with him of what has happened at home, or in the market, or at the bar of justice, or in the palace or theatre, what this and that man has done, how one has lost a lawsuit, another gained his case; and our lips do not even here cease from unjust and useless complaints against the government and its acts. Is this to be pardoned? When one comes before the king, he has reverence enough to speak

of those things, of which the king wishes to speak; but thou, when thou comest into the presence of the King of kings, before whom angels bow in humility, dost consent to be led astray and speak of mire and dirt! Earthly things are this and nothing more before God. You say: ‘but evil is so rife in the world, the government of the state is so bad, therefore our heads are so full of it.’ Who then is to blame for this? Some say, the indiscretion and wickedness of those who rule. Believe it not. We ourselves, our sins, have ruined us, and brought upon us all our distress and calamity, our wars and defeats. Should we now, so far as we are able, put in their place the wisest and best, there would be no improvement, if we remained the same. O that every one, here at least, would think of himself, and accuse himself, not another!”

At another time he laments that many came only to hear a fine address, or the sermon, and not to elevate the soul in prayer and song with the congregation.

“‘Why should I go to the church,’ says one, ‘if I can hear no sermon?’ In this way much is lost; for is a sermon the most essential part of worship? Have you not the Bible at home? Yet this is the best sermon; all that is necessary we find in it. But you seek entertainment, therefore you ask for the sermon.”

Once before in Antioch he had bewailed the same evil, and complained that the people forsook the church immediately after the close of the sermon.

“I know well your excuse: ‘I can pray at home,’

you say, ‘but the preaching, the instruction I cannot have there.’ It is true, you may pray at home, but not as you may in the church, where one prayer from so many voices ascends to God. Besides, here is something more, namely, Christian fellowship, the harmony of all, the bond of love. Of what use is the sermon to you, if prayer is not associated with it? First the prayer, then the Word.” “Nothing has such power to arouse the soul, and raise it above the earth and loose it from the fetters of the body, as a holy song, by which the whole congregation with one spirit and one voice send up a prayer to heaven!”

“This,” he said one Sunday at Constantinople, “this has ruined the church, that you seek not to hear a discourse which produces a change of heart, but one which delights by the splendor and order of beautiful words; as if the church were established to the end that singers and harpers might here display their skill. And we who preach are such miserable men that we yield to your desires instead of opposing them, and instead of changing you and drawing you to God, we court your applause.”

Thirsting after purity of heart, and yet grieved on account of his want of it, the pious man continues:—

“Believe me, I only speak the sentiments of my heart: if I hear your applause for my words, my human feelings for the moment are gratified;—why should I not speak the truth? But afterwards at home, when I think how, for empty renown, the benefit of the sermon for you and for me has been

wholly lost, then I groan and weep, and feel that all has been in vain. Often heretofore have I thought of forbidding loud manifestations of applause. Let us to-day establish it as a law among us, that such words of praise shall no more interrupt the preacher, and let it henceforth be our purpose to apply the whole mind to the reception of God's Word in our hearts."

While he thus spoke, the vain, frivolous multitude broke out in loud applause.

"For what," exclaimed the bishop, "is this noise? I utter plainly the law which ought to be observed by us; and you cannot endure for a single moment to hear me quietly! If you will applaud, do it in the market, or when you hear the harpers and actors; the church is no theatre!"

If this was the state of things in the church at Constantinople, what may it have been in their homes and hearts? The indecorum of applauding will most surprise our readers, because this custom, on account of the quiet hitherto observed in our Christian congregations, appears to us altogether strange and unsuitable. But let us not censure this too severely. I will not excuse it, yet it is explained from the habits of that age and from the public life of the Greeks and Romans. For a long period we knew it only in the theatre, but more recently it has shown itself with us also in other places. We only need to call attention to our popular assemblies, and to listen to the serious, though not religious debates, of the chambers. From these it has pressed its way into other congregations. We have heard of large

meetings held in churches, and for consultation concerning the church, in which, nevertheless, the presiding officers were scarcely able to prevent applause, where the audience, instead of *Bravo* which was forbidden, requested permission to cry out at least *Amen*. To be sure, this begins with an A in place of a B; but is the difference so great?

We will now return to Chrysostom and hear him speak against two evils, which exist indeed at all times, but which had then reached a very great height. One was avarice, the love of money, under whose influence the powerful, the first men at court, and especially the Empress herself, permitted and practised the most flagrant injustice; the other was insatiable pleasure seeking.

We read with horror in the accounts of that period of the violent deeds by which the great of the kingdom enriched themselves; by which whole families were constantly losing their property, and in the strict sense of the word were reduced to beggary. We shall subsequently hear how Chrysostom labored in behalf of many of these unfortunates. We may here present a word which he uttered publicly against this evil.

It was spoken after an event which threw the city into great excitement, deeply affected many, cast down the mighty and drove them to flight.

“ What I have often announced by word, the deed of these days has published in the streets. The wind blows, and the leaves fall; ‘all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away.’ Now

is made known what is shadow and what is truth. I thought within myself, will not the people this time become wise, or will they all after two days be again as before? I repeat it, ‘all flesh is as grass.’ But what does it profit? and yet, if all do not hear it, perhaps ten may; and if not ten, possibly one; and if no one hears, still I have performed my part as a witness before you, ‘the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away.’ Where are your riches now? So I might ask of those who have fled away.”

A few days after, when many had spoken of the sermon, and with murmurs, as was often the case, he returned to the subject and said:—

“I speak thus, not to upbraid you with misfortune, not to tear open afresh your wounds, but to teach you, by a sight of the shipwreck of others, to seek a safe harbor. When swords threatened us, when the city was on fire, when the Emperor’s crown and sceptre had lost their power and brilliancy, then where were riches? where silver couches? where the multitude of slaves? All were sent away.

“Am I a troublesome, obtrusive man, because I say and often repeat: Riches deceive those who trust in them? The experience of the past, and of these present times, confirms the truth of my words. Why do you hold them so fast? Can they help you in the hour of need?

“One upbraids me that I always assail the rich. It is true, for the rich assail the poor; and yet I attack not the rich, but those who wickedly use their wealth. I oppose not riches, but rapacity. Discrim-

inate well;—art thou rich, I do not contend with thee; but dost thou appropriate to thyself the property of others, then I cannot be silent. Will you slander me, persecute me? If I could thereby prevent the evil, I should be ready to pour out my blood. Beloved, the rich are my children, and the poor are my children. If you assail the poor I must complain of you, must I not? since the poor cannot protect themselves. And yet the poor man suffers not so much as you; he is injured in property, but you in soul. I can do no otherwise;—be angry, persecute, stone me, I fear it not; I fear but one thing—sin.

“How much have I seen change and pass away, since I entered this city; and has it come to its senses? Know you not that this life is only a pilgrimage? We are not citizens,—we are only strangers and pilgrims here. When on a journey you come to an inn, do you waste your time there in adorning your room? Who would be so foolish! but we eat, refresh ourselves, and then hasten away. So should it be with life: we have come hither and taken our place,—let us see to it, that we be able to leave it again with fresh courage and high hope. We know not when we shall be called away. You lay up in store for many years, but the Lord calls—‘Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.’”

“I repeat and shall not cease to do so, though I thus cause pain,—Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; covet not that which belongs to another, rob not the widows, grieve not the orphans. I point out no person, but only the

thing; if your conscience lashes you, that is your fault, not the fault of my words."

We might expect that the bishop would have to fight against the pursuit after pleasure, and he did contend against it. In that generation, pleasure seeking was the great business, and opportunities were not wanting to gratify it. Theatre, races, games of many kinds succeeded each other; and to these were added what we — praise God! — do not know, — the cruel and bloody contests, in which men fought with one another or with wild beasts, for the amusement of old and young, men and women. In the earlier and better times of the Christian church, her members took no part in all these. Subsequently when corruption broke in, it was otherwise, the so-called Christians rejoiced and exulted in them even as the heathen. Earnest servants of the church said much against this practice, and Christian Emperors issued many laws to prevent it, but in vain. When our ancestors, the old German tribes, came into connection with the people of the Roman Empire, they wondered at the life of constant amusement which they beheld, and one of the Goths proposed the significant question: "Have then the Greeks and Romans no wives or children at home, that they are ever on the race-course or in the theatre?" The "good" Christians knew very well how to apologize for their conduct. As people in our day, who take no delight in home and go to the theatre for a short-lived gratification of sense, strive to conceal their misery by speaking of the art and culture which one may gain in the theatre; so men at that time professed that the victories

which were won by great exertion in the race-course, and the crowns with which they were decorated, were quite edifying, since they reminded them of the unsading crown in heaven, and of the truth and courage appropriate to a soldier in the church militant. A canting lie, which Chrysostom once sharply reproved as ridiculous hypocrisy.

I have quoted the saying of a Goth, and may also here mention an act of fifty Saxons. These fifty had been taken captive by the Romans in war, and were shut up in prison, to be led out on a festival to mutual combat and slaughter for the amusement of the populace. In their forests they had probably encountered many a wild beast, and in the battle field they had not trembled at death; but to shed the blood of one another here as a spectacle for the multitude, was revolting to the honorable feelings of these brave men. It was not to be. On the morning when they were to be led into the arena, they were found dead in the prison.—they had taken their own lives during the night. Thus we find the nature of a rude people and the holy feeling of genuine Christians united in their abhorrence of these wanton or cruel amusements of cultivated Greeks and Romans.

Chrysostom spake many a word against this spirit of his age. The following is a specimen.

On the sixth of April, in the year 399, during Easter week, a violent storm had wrought such fearful desolation in the city and upon the adjacent fields, that the inhabitants were terrified, and for the moment seriously disposed. They streamed in crowds to the church, and when the storm ceased, formed a procession, after the

custom of the time, and sung in a chapel near the city songs of penitence and thanksgiving. Chrysostom accompanied and addressed them, rejoicing at the susceptible and earnest disposition of the multitude about him. This occurred on Thursday. On Friday, the day of Christ's death, Chrysostom expected to see all in the church at worship; but a horserace drew a throng of persons upon the neighboring race-course, and the worship in the church was disturbed by their wild shouts and cries. On Saturday the disorderly Circensian games were celebrated, and they resorted thither again, and much wickedness was perpetrated. On the following Sunday the bishop thus poured out his heart in indignation and sorrow:—

“Is this to be endured?” he began, “can such conduct be quietly seen in a Christian church? I ask you. Ye shall be your own judges. As God in one place asks Israel (*Micah vi. 3*), What have I done to thee, my people? How have I injured thee? tell me. So do I ask you. Is this to be endured? Can we look in silence upon such conduct? A few days since we sat together in quiet worship, and listened unitedly to the solemn Word of God,—and directly after, a whole crowd hasten to the disorderly games, act as if beside themselves, fill the city with their wild cries, so that one might have wept for grief. I sat at home in shame, and could not raise my eyes. What shall we say, how excuse ourselves, if a stranger comes among us and asks, Is this a Christian city? Is this the city which possesses a church dedicated to the apostles, and which loves Jesus Christ? Is this a church and temple of God? Nor have you spared

the day on which the sign was given for the deliverance of our race! On Friday, the day of our Lord's crucifixion, when the sacrifice was presented, the curse annulled, sin taken away, and reconciliation made,—on that day ye left the assembly of your brethren and sisters, and suffered yourselves, caught in the bands of Satan, to be dragged away to the games. Can this be suffered? Can we look quietly upon such conduct? You know that when we intrust our money to servants, we call them to render account of the penny even, and so also will God demand of us an account of the days of our life. What will you say, when called to give answer before God respecting this Friday and this Sunday? Lo, the sun has risen for thee, the moon also has given her light for thy sake by night, the night in turn has passed and the day has dawned anew, all for thy sake, but thou — hast served the lust of the world, and Satan!"

He then describes the games, and declares that no person could return from them with a soul uncontaminated. He asks the men how they can revisit their homes and appear before their wives and daughters. He alludes with burning indignation to the fact, that many fathers took along their children to these games, and thus exposed innocent youth to moral ruin, and he calls them directly murderers of their children. The sharp and unsparing way in which he described these games was certainly then and there in place; but I will spare the ears of my readers. Still I must here relate, that at the close of this address, after he has most pressingly entreated them to refrain henceforth from such things, he asserts

that he will no more permit those who take part in these games to approach the altar.

In a later section (xi. 2) we shall return to this sharp declaration; but we will now pause in our sketch of this kind of addresses. It would be an error to suppose that Chrysostom found any pleasure in thus speaking, or that he could speak only thus in the capital, because he found no one there with a heart for any thing else. He spake often in a different manner, and many a true heart in his congregation understood his language. What he says for such will now, I hope, be read with pleasure.

In the twenty-second homily on the Epistle to the Hebrews, which he explained, as well as most of the Bible, before the church, he says :—

“ As we seek that which is lost, so must we seek God. If one has lost his child, what will he not do in order to find it? We think not of money, or time, or strength, or house, or court; and when we have found the lost child we hold it fast and will not let it go. Seek, says the Saviour, seek God, and ye shall find. But the seeking of God requires time, labor, and exertion, for many things stand in our way.

“ The sun stands fast in heaven and is there every day; but the mountaineer, who lives below, has many heights to scale before he obtains a view of it. We live below, we are buried in pleasure and worldly desires, and wallow in the mire of earth; and if we have set ourselves free from that which is grossest, our eye is still covered by the fog. If we shake off the dust and press through the vapors of earth, we shall there behold the glory of God.

"I am acquainted with men, who, when they pray, stretch forth their arms violently as if they would raise themselves above the earth. It were better if the arms were permitted to rest when we pray, and the soul were raised to heaven; for the spirit is more ethereal and capable of a higher flight than arms and wings."

At another time, conceiving the matter differently, he said:—

"No one is chained to the earth against his will. We may now live in heaven, for it depends on the direction of the will alone. I mean this.—We say, God is in heaven; but we do not mean by this, that heaven as a place incloses Him and the earth is deprived of His presence, but we speak thus on account of the close relationship of the higher spirits, the angels above, with him. Hence if our mind and will take the direction and gain the purity which they have in the case of angels, then we are in heaven. What care I for the *locality* of heaven, if I have the Lord of heaven, if I become myself a heaven? 'and my Father,' saith the Lord, 'will come to you and abide with you.' Let us then make our souls a heaven."

But however high he rose at times, he let himself down with perfect simplicity, for he well knew that the best have need of this.

"We ought," he says, "to be *ever* with God, but by all means be thou uniformly with Him when thy soul goes to rest. By day we are easily disturbed by the dissipation and intrusive cares of life. But at evening and in the night, when quiet is in the soul,

we may abide with God. And in the morning, if we turn to God on awaking, we shall go self-collected to our business. If we begin the morning in union with God we shall not so easily during the day fall into disquiet and strife and bitterness. Storm and war await us daily; we are in need of defensive armor;—prayer is a mighty weapon.

“Surprising is it, that our servants, when we give them food, do not go away without expressing thanks, while we, who enjoy so much good, so often fail of giving honor to God. We surely should never sit down or rise up from table without offering a prayer of thanksgiving.”

Moreover, while in view of the great mass of the people he opposes the corruption of the times as with a two-edged sword, he also admonishes others to remember the blessing which these sad events might and did bring to those who were prepared for them.

“Scandals have not appeared in our day for the first time,” says he, “they were from the beginning of the church; I do not mean such as come from without, but such as have originated in herself. Think of the hypocrisy of Ananias, of the murmuring of the ‘Grecians,’ of Simon the Magian, and of those who accused Peter because he had baptized the Gentile Cornelius. Nothing good happens, unless evil at once creeps in. We must not be disquieted, though many fall thereby, but rather thank God for preserving us in the fire. Not merely suffering, but temptations may also serve for our glory. Whoever holds fast to the truth, while tempted by no one to error, is no very warm friend; but he is tried and genuine

who adheres to it when many would draw him away. I do not now say that God is the author of offences; that be far from me! I only mean that God causes the evil to work for our good. The excellence of religion is proved by the fact that many pretend to possess it. The odorous balsam is imitated; because it is so fragrant and so necessary there are many spurious kinds; but no man takes the trouble to imitate common oil."

In the homily on Heb. xi. 39, 40, where it reads: "these all received not the promise — that they without us should not be made perfect," he says:—

"*Still* they had not received it, *still* they waited for it, and even after they had ended their life in such tribulation. So much time had passed after their victory, and still they had not received it! And should we already sigh, that we stand yet in the conflict? Remember what is said, that Abraham and the Apostle Paul sit and *wait*, until thou art made perfect, that they may then also receive their reward. Until we come, has the Saviour said, He will not give the reward to them; just as a tender father would say to good sons who had finished their work: I will give you to eat when your brother also comes. And shall we complain, that we are not placed beyond the reach of calamity, that we have not attained complete blessedness? What should Abel say, who conquered before all, and has not yet been crowned! They have preceded us in the warfare, but they receive not the crown sooner than we. The Lord does no wrong to them, but yet He does honor to us. They cheerfully wait for their brethren, for we are all

one body, and therefore this body enjoys a greater glory if all are crowned in common and not a part by itself. It is characteristic of the righteous to rejoice over the happiness of their brethren in like manner as over their own; and it is exactly after their mind to be crowned in connection with their members, for to be glorified *together* is great blessedness."

Discoursing of Christian fellowship in the family and among friends, he said:—

"Every house consisting of husband and wife is a church. That they are but two is no objection, for where two or three are together there is He in the midst of them; and if ye have Christ with you, ye are not alone, still other invisible witnesses are present. Do not expect every thing from us your teachers, and the officers of the church. If you will, you can profit one another more than we can benefit you. You are always together, and know one another better than we can know you. You know the condition of each brother, in what he is deficient or in want, and you can speak freely and plainly one with another. You can be mutual teachers and ministers; do not overlook your gift and calling in this respect. We help one another in all other matters, and should we not in religion? We rejoice together at feasts, we accompany the dead unitedly to the grave—and in Christian labor for the living do we wish for no fellowship? Let us give attention to our own errors and deficiencies, and at the same time take it kindly of our friends if they admonish us. This is friendship—where brother supports brother."

We will present an extract from a spirited address,

which he made in a less numerous assembly than commonly surrounded him,— for there were ten thousand people in his church. He appears on that day to have been filled with joy of heart in a small circle, and he speaks not for instruction on a selected theme, but rather as his kindled feelings move him to speak.

“ What joy,” he says, “ what a blessing is it, thus in God’s house to exercise ourselves in the Holy Scriptures and to draw from this rich fountain. It is pleasant indeed to wander in verdant fields and lovely gardens, to pause under the green covert of trees, to behold the full bloom of roses and lilies and breathe their fragrance; but we have still more in the house of God, and from the contemplation of Divine truth we bring back with us to our homes yet another blessing. Our Bible alone gives the peace of God and the courage, springing from this, to fulfil our duty, to bear our trials, and power too for that course of life which the apostle names ‘ conversation in heaven.’ ”

“ How infatuated are the hapless men, to whom the church is a strange place and the Bible a strange book, who are only at home in the market, or courts of justice, or places of pleasure. They will learn this in the day, when all semblance, all masks, all delusions shall fall away, and every one shall stand disrobed, as he is in his inmost soul.

“ Let us turn from them to-day. With seriousness, with devotion, with joy you have come around me, and we have *the joy* which they know not. All of us, young and old, rich and poor, bond and free, men and women, what have we now enjoyed in our

united psalm! With one voice, and as it were with one heart, have we sung the prayer. As the hand of the harper unites all the strings to one song, so has the psalm brought together our hearts in one prayer. And the royal poet, who wrote ages gone by, has been present with us to-day by his psalm and has joined in our worship.

“ So is it in the church ;—in the courts of kings it is otherwise. There *he* speaks whose head is adorned with a crown, and all others, however high in dignity, must stand around in silence. Here the prophet speaks and we all answer, his voice and ours become one. In the church there are no distinctions, the slave prays and sings with us all as well as his master, the poorest as well as the richest, and women as well as men, we all bring the same offering and all enjoy the same right and honor. This is like unto heaven, great and beautiful is the church of our God.

“ She makes the slave a master, the poor rich, and women in her become men. Think you not so ? The church, I say, makes men of women, and, I add, the world makes women of men. Are the vain young lords, who paint their cheeks, and curl their hair, and promenade our streets, are these in reality men ? The apostle says in 1 Tim. v. 6 of women who live in pleasure, that they are dead ; he excludes them from the number of the living, and how can I then reckon those effeminate weaklings among the race of living men ? One who has power over himself, and quakes before no enemy, is a man. And such there have been and are among the women of the church of God, women as heroic as any man whatsoever, and

who, clothed with the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, have defeated more and mightier foes than fall in the battle field.

“ Do I say too much? Are the words I speak mere boastings? That you may see I have not said enough, a person shall be cited before you, who was by nature a woman, but who appears in history like an angel of God, like one who had never borne flesh and blood. I refer to the mother of those seven sons, of whom we read in the book of Maccabees. Place the bravest warrior beside her, and you will be compelled to say, that this woman is raised as far above him, as the vault of heaven is above the earth. What is the single stroke beneath which the warrior falls and dies, to the sevenfold anguish which poured through the heart of that mother as she saw her sons one after another broiled in the pans of Antiochus: yet there she stood and remained, she stood like an iron mountain. Ye, who are fathers and mothers, can feel the tortures which she must have felt, more terrible than if a thousand arrows had pierced her heart. The young men whom she bore in her heart died a thousand deaths while she stood there — how long! — even as a rock, which the violence of waves cannot shake, — the surges roar around and dash into foam against it! there she stands firm as adamant. Say what I will, no word can be found to express the fortitude of this woman. May I not then call this woman a man?

“ Have there not been manly females? as Phoebe, of whom the bold apostle (Rom. xvi. 1) is not ashamed to say, she has rendered much assistance to me ? and

Priscilla, of whom he says, ‘She has for my life laid down her neck ; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles ?’ (Rom. xvi. 4.)

“ Let no one say, I am a weak lady, and cannot therefore be so pious, do so much, or bear so heavy a burden. In this our Word of God there lies a Divine power for all, for us who are men and for you who are women, to become firm and strong, so that, if God calls, we can meet every conflict, and bear every pain. To this may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ help us ;— and to Him whose power is mighty in the weak, be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

In the church of the capital there were those who sympathized with him in such remarks. Among the men and women there were many with whom he had communion of heart and spirit, and who aided him efficiently in his plans and labors for the church. Especially near to him, in this sense, were several elderly women, mostly widows, and in part from illustrious and very wealthy families, who with their strength and ability devoted themselves to the work.

In the earliest period of Christianity we find women whose circumstances allowed them to labor as servants of the church. They were called deaconesses. The church needed female assistance ; for, to guard against suspicion, the clergy in many places avoided entering the abodes of females which were often separated from those of men ; and communication was therefore held through pious and experienced women. At baptism their help could not be dispensed with.

The deaconesses were formally set apart as officers of the church, and like the preacher, were solemnly dedicated to their work. A prayer which was offered on such an occasion, has been preserved, namely :—

“Eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of men and of women, Thou who in times past didst fill with thy Spirit Mary, Deborah, Hannah and Huldah, who hast accounted woman worthy to bear thy Son in her womb, Thou who didst choose, in the tabernacle and the temple, the keepers of thy holy gates—look down also now upon this thy handmaid who has been chosen for the service of the church, and give her thy Holy Spirit, purify her from all contamination of the flesh and the spirit, in order that she may worthily perform the work imposed upon her, to thy glory and the praise of thy Christ.”

A number of such assistants were found in the church at Constantinople; moreover Chrysostom drew many to himself, who honored in him their spiritual father. One of these was particularly dear to him, and deserves to be especially noticed.

VIII.

CHRYSOSTOM AND OLYMPIAS.

OLYMPIAS was born A. D. 368, of one of the most illustrious families of the time. Her grandfather, Ablavius, under the Emperor Constantine, had been prime minister, the most powerful man after his master in the Roman Empire. Her parents she lost when a child, but she had the good fortune to be intrusted for her education to a genuine Christian named Theodosia. Before she was seventeen years of age, the distinguished, beautiful, and gifted young maiden, through her guardian, was married to Nebridius, *præfect* of the capital. The marriage lasted only twenty months. In 386 her husband died, and it will readily be supposed that suitors for the young widow soon offered themselves. The Emperor Theodosius desired to unite her with one of his relatives, and pressed very earnestly for the fulfilment of his wishes. But she firmly rejected them all. At the death-bed of her husband, the seed which her governess had implanted within her, took root; or, to speak more correctly, the nature of Olympias took

its peculiar direction, and aspired after that which is eternal.

The Emperor was displeased and commanded all her property to be put under a guardian until she should reach the age of thirty. But the way in which she bore this, joyful at being thus relieved from much toil and protected from many a temptation, moved the passionate, yet on the whole well-disposed Theodosius, two years later, to restore it to her; and thenceforth all her wealth, which was great, was at her control. But she used it only for others; she had ceased to live for herself, her spirit was wholly consecrated to the service of God and men. Under the predecessor of Chrysostom, she had entered into the service of the church and had accepted the office of deaconess.

When Chrysostom came to Constantinople, she naturally found in him a bishop after her own heart; and the more perfectly she became acquainted with him, the longer she lived and labored under his direction, the higher rose her veneration for him. She was also greatly indebted to him in spiritual things and had been much benefited by his influence.

Before her intercourse with him, Olympias was indeed an earnest and zealous Christian, endeavoring to serve God and man. But her love to men was yet deficient in sound spiritual understanding, and her piety, like that of very many devout persons of this age, had somewhat that did not spring from Christianity; it was morbid. Chrysostom, as a good physician, aided her in both respects.

To be more specific. When the Emperor Theo-

dosius had taken her property from her control she wrote to him a letter of thanks, in which she said: " You have exhibited, Sire, not merely the wisdom and goodness of a sovereign, but also of a bishop, towards your humble servant, by laying the heavy burden of the wealth which I possess, upon your officers, and thus relieving me from the care and disquiet which the necessity of managing it must have occasioned. I have but one request, and by granting it you will greatly increase my joy: command the property to be divided between the churches and the poor."

We might take this to be the youthful enthusiasm of one in her first love, and can well understand the pious feelings which she proceeds to express: " I have long felt the movings of that vanity which attends a distribution of one's own charities, and have been in fear lest the anxieties connected with temporal wealth might lead me to neglect the pearl of great price." But when her property was restored to her hands, the same disposition was shown. She gave freely, and whoever came and asked went away with a full purse. She gave at once, without ascertaining whether there were any actual need. It was her delight to give, moreover she esteemed it a duty. Especially did she pour out her wealth for spiritual objects; she not only built a number of churches in different places, but also loaded with benefactions the clergy, both monks and preachers. We may easily imagine how her liberality was abused.

Such a course did not secure the approval of Chrysostom. He thus utters his thoughts on this point:—

“If a servant of the church has enough, give him no more, and though he is a pious man thou shouldest prefer a less devout but needy individual before him. Christ did not say: when thou makest a supper call thy friends, but the halt and the lame. He does not say merely: ye fed me; but, I was *an hungered* and ye fed me. What is the propriety of giving to a man who is not in need, because he is pious? And if he has enough, and yet receives in charity, he is not indeed pious.”

Further: Olympias had not only denied herself all expense, all the vanity of ornament and state, all the pleasures and luxuries of sense,—this we could mention but with praise, since she had become acquainted with a higher good; but along with this, she had become unduly severe to herself, and did not allow to her body the food and drink which it required for this life. She denied herself rest by night, and practised watching and fasting, in order to become still stronger in abstinence. Now, as she was of a delicate nature, and as a maiden of high rank had been delicately nurtured, she suffered by this course, and the bad effects upon her health were soon patent. A letter of Chrysostom indicates the great injury which she had inflicted upon herself: “As thy body was fragile and accustomed to every indulgence, it has been so assailed by these manifold severities, that it is no better than if it were slain, and thou hast brought upon thyself so many diseases, that the skill of physicians is no longer of any avail, and thou livest in perpetual pain.”

She was not alone in this error. It was already

wide spread, and in the centuries following gained more and more the ascendency over Christians. To afflict one's self was supposed to be right and pleasing to God, and the less bodily comfort any one had the better man was he esteemed. Many went so far as to inflict the severest tortures upon themselves, and expected to win the favor of God thereby. We have seen, that life in cloisters was already frequent, and was thought to be especially Christian. The spirit which reigned in cloisters during the early centuries is alien to our pleasure seeking age. In view of this contrast, we may well speak in defence of those cloisters, and may justly say, that they were grand phenomena in this world of sense and sensual pleasure. In them lived the noblest and most gifted men and women, such as were adapted to their time, and exerted in many respects a blessed influence. Yet is it true, that cloisters are not the growth of a Christian soil, nor do they owe their existence to the Spirit of Christ.

Our Bible says, indeed, that "godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out," etc. 1 Tim. vi. 6. It says, that those who belong to Christ, "crucify their flesh with its affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24. But it also says: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility." It speaks of those who "have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; and do not honor the flesh as it needs," Col. ii.; it warns against such as "forbid to marry and abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with

thanksgiving,— for every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving” 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4; and in the eighth verse: “bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and that which is to come.”

A faith, a view of the world, which announces such principles, will build no cloisters for the reception of monks and nuns, nor will it destroy the health of the body by watching and fasting. The spirit which at that time pressed into the church of Christ, sprung from a different temper, faith, and style of thought. Among the heathen of India, the degenerate Jews in Egypt, and the secluded mystical Essenes, who dwelt on the western shore of the Dead Sea, we find this system even before the time of Christ. From Egypt and Syria it urged its way into the Christian church. The spirit of monachism had its origin in a proud effort of man to feel himself independent in soul of vulgar matter, to be a simple spirit, and it was closely connected with a belief, that every thing material is essentially evil, and that the miserable and sinful state of mankind results from a union of the soul with the body. Wherever this belief lived, though unconsciously in the soul, it was perfectly natural that a desire should exist to destroy as far as possible the body. The simplest method of doing this, was for a man to free himself from matter by suicide, expecting at once to possess a healthful spirit and to be delivered from all misfortune and sin.

The Bible, the apostles, and the primitive church

speak of a disordered body and of excessive sensuality, but they did not regard a spirit freed from matter as equivalent to a good spirit. On the contrary, they found the seat of depravity in the spirit. This, in order to be independent, has turned away from God, the fountain of life, and trusting in itself is forsaken by the Most High and sinks helplessly into the power of sense and sin. Man's redemption, therefore, does not consist in being set free from the body, but in being reunited to God, and by the power of a divine life, becoming the master of his animal nature, making it the organ of a rectified will; and then even the pleasures of sense are sanctified and harmless. Whoever has reached this position can eat and drink as much as the body requires, can enjoy rest, and live in marriage upon earth, and yet be sure of God's approbation.

This Christian view of things was then lost, and Olympias believed, that her piety would be augmented in proportion to her fasting and watching, and to the pain which she inflicted upon herself. And Chrysostom — ?

In youth he had been a strict monk and very severe with himself, and if at a later period he bewailed the sad effect which those excessive severities had upon his health, he did not repent the conflicts which he had then victoriously waged, for he knew how much he was indebted to them. Nay more, through life he esteemed very highly the spiritual labors of earnest genuine monks, and was a friend to cloisters. The spirit of the age, from which no one is able to free

himself entirely, had a power over him, and he not only remained unmarried, as a bishop then must,¹ but he also believed a life of celibacy peculiarly holy before God. Yet in his later years he was free from the error of supposing self-torture to be a virtue, and he therefore regarded many repulsive features of his age with a feeling totally different from that entertained by a multitude of his earnest contemporaries. He held in high esteem the life of a pious wife by the side of her husband and in the midst of her children. In one place he very beautifully describes a mother, seated at the bedside of her dying child, and with Christian submission, without a word of complaint, giving back to the Lord what He had given to her. He depicts her sufferings, not unlike those of the

¹ The opinion early gained admission into the church, that an unmarried life was eminently pleasing to God and favorable to holiness. Before the year 200, as we learn from Tertullian, a second marriage began to be esteemed unlawful for the clergy. The language of Paul in 1 Tim. iii. 2, was urged in justification of this view. But it stood in very little need of any scriptural support, for it was in perfect harmony with the ascetic notions of morality prevalent in that age. During the third century celibacy became more general among those who entered the sacred office, and such as had been previously married were encouraged to observe perfect continence. This was enjoined by the council at Elvira, of Spain, in A. D. 305. Ere long all of clerical rank in the western church were not only forbidden to marry, but also were required, in case they had wives, to separate from them. The oriental church pursued for a time a less unchristian course, merely prohibiting marriage after ordination, but leaving each one free to continue or dissolve an existing union, according to his own ideas of right and duty. Thus the matter was left by the Council of Nice in A. D. 325. Hence many bishops of the East lived in wedlock down to the time of Chrysostom and later; as e. g. the father of Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Hilary of Poitiers, and Synesius.—Trs.

martyrs, and the fortitude with which she endures them. Thus a mother, he says, though she takes not the knife in her hand like Abraham, brings the same offering which he brought. And in another place he declares expressly, that the essential element of a virgin life well pleasing to God is not celibacy, but rather a full surrender of the soul to Christ, and he appeals in support of this statement to the Apostle Paul, who says, in 1 Cor. vii. 32, that she is a true virgin, who careth for the things which belong to the Lord.

In harmony with these convictions, he must have rejoiced in Olympias in view of her care for the things of God, her declining a second marriage, her love of Divine things, and her cheerful service of the church,— but the way in which she made use of her property for everybody, and the monkish self-torture which she practised, revealed to him a moral disease which he believed it his duty to heal.

“I praise your zeal,” he once said to her, “but whoever strives to reach the summit of perfect virtue before God, must wisely bestow his charities; while you, by augmenting the treasures of the rich, seem ready to cast your wealth into the sea; forgetting that you have consecrated your gold to the poor, and must therefore employ it as no longer your own property, but as a talent for which you will be called to give account. If you follow my counsel, you will regulate your charities by the necessities of those who solicit them.”

Olympias at length perceived the impropriety of her previous course, and proceeded thenceforth accord-

ing to the judgment of her bishop. Hence many, who had often enjoyed her liberal gifts, obtained them no longer. And what was the result? — The world is ever the same; there were those from this time onward who gave no good account of the friendship between Chrysostom and Olympias. The Lord Jesus Christ well knew the truth of His words: “behold I send you as lambs in the midst of wolves,” and “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad.” Chrysostom did not allow himself to be moved by the talk of men. The hearty friendship between him and Olympias continued through life, and the great sufferings which overtook this noble woman and many other persons from their connection with the bishop, but confirmed their attachment to him. We shall hear of this at a later period.

I will close this section with a few words of Chrysostom, who had sharp eyes, and could not be deceived by a course of conduct like that of Olympias, yet not springing from such a mind and spirit.

“Many,” he says, “who have taken the vow to remain virgins, subdue their nature in this respect, but fail in another. The love of ornament and splendid apparel they have not wholly conquered, but they are even more infected with vanity than other women. What advantage have they in not wearing gold and pearls and gems? The pearls and stones are not in themselves evil; it is the desire to please and attract notice which is sinful. It matters not whether I seek to do this by uncommon simplicity, by coarse apparel,

by sacrifice and self-conquest, or by gold and silk. But they think not of this; provided only they do not go on as the children of this world, they imagine themselves to be good and devout, thus deceiving and being deceived.”

IX.

CHRYSOSTOM AND EUTROPIUS.

EUTROPIUS, of whom we have before spoken, was a native of Armenia, and originally a slave. He was purchased by different masters, but always sold again in a short time. No one had retained him long in his service. At last Arinthus, a high officer, had given him to his daughter as a part of her dowry, to braid her hair and arrange her headdress. He was no longer young when, at last, he obtained his freedom, went to the capital, and succeeded in procuring for himself a minor service at court. He now artfully strove to draw upon himself the eyes of Theodosius the Emperor, and to win his favor by flattery. Successful in this he was constantly advanced to higher posts and employed by the Emperor in more important services. Under Arcadius, the son and successor of Theodosius, he rose so high as to entertain the hope of seizing the helm of state. We have already noticed the means by which he effected so much. He induced the Emperor to marry Eudoxia, caused Rufinus to be murdered, and, by favor of the Empress, took his place. From that time he was known as the prime minister, but was in effect master of the

empire. City and country felt the heavy hand of this unworthy slave. He made use of his power but to enrich himself. After the death of Rufinus, the Emperor gave command, that the property which this man had illegally amassed should be restored to its rightful owners. Eutropius began by annulling this command, and took possession of the vast estate left by the murdered officer. He then removed from office those who did not please him, and sold the posts thus vacated, to the highest bidder. The purchasers, again, regarded their offices but as means for procuring money. He deposed, for example, the court chancellor Marcellus, a brave and able man, from his office, and suffered Hosius, a Spanish slave who had made money as a cook, to assume it. No man possessed of wealth was secure. Eutropius was surrounded by creatures, who pointed out to him the rich, and these upon false accusations were imprisoned, condemned, and robbed of their property. Many families were reduced by him to want and the beggar's staff. Ere long a deep dislike and bitter enmity to the new master became general both in the country and in the capital; but he was master and had the power; they were enraged,— yet bowed their necks in silence.

Chrysostom was not silent, a man of his spirit and position could not be silent. Whenever he spoke of the miserable state of the country under such an administration, of the insecurity of human possessions, of the weak and trembling ground on which all the glory of earth stands, he would often allude to the sad events which were known to all. He spoke with

earnestness and emphasis, indifferent whether his language might be reported to the great lord and provoke his anger or not.

“ If we look,” he once said, “ upon the present condition of earthly things, does not all appear like dust and water? What shall I mention first? The possession of high offices of state? They are indeed greatly esteemed in this world; but we shall find stability in the particles of dust which the sun reveals to us floating about in the air, sooner than in these, especially at the present time. To what are the possessors of these offices exposed! They are forced to tremble before their own (so-called) friends, before their slaves, before those to whom every thing is venal, before the fury of the people below, and before the displeasure of the powerful above. The man who sat as judge yesterday, is cast down and deprived of all things to-day.

“ The poor live in rest and peace; but the rich? How many must die miserably, as criminals and robbers! Poverty is now a defence, while wealth brings danger.”

Every man felt the truth of such language, and could verify it by many examples of that time. But Chrysostom did not rest satisfied with this. Eutropius was in error, if he imagined himself secure from reproof, because he had made Chrysostom bishop; nor did the use of pious words, and the rich gifts, with which for a time he sustained the latter in his Christian enterprises, avail him any thing in this respect. Chrysostom suffered himself to be neither deceived nor bribed. He uttered to Eutropius the truth, in love

and seriousness. In letters and by word of mouth this man was compelled to hear: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But in vain. And therefore it was to be expected, that these two men would publicly fall out with each other as soon as circumstances were favorable. Now unfortunate persons, who were persecuted by Eutropius, often fled into the church, where, according to the custom of that age, they were safe from their pursuers, even though officers of justice. Eutropius more than once in such a case desired the bishop to deliver up the accused; but, planting himself on his right as established by long usage, Chrysostom steadily resisted these demands and delivered the unfortunates. Exasperated at this, Eutropius finally induced the Emperor to abrogate by law this custom, and to issue a command to the bishop, that he should not in such cases withstand men in authority.

Did Chrysostom obey this command? No. He shielded the first man who sought protection at his altar after the enactment of this law; and this first man was — Eutropius himself.

Let us trace this remarkable change in the course of events. The bishop was certainly right in so often reiterating the sentiment, "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man, as the flower of grass; the wind passeth over it, and it is gone."

Two powerful generals, who were Goths, and therefore of the German race, stood at the head of the Gothic auxiliaries, and, as so many others, were embittered against the miserable slave and against the

administration, which he arbitrarily directed. They resolved to overthrow him by violence. Perhaps they had in mind something more; they may have looked for the fall of the imperial family, and hoped to seize in their own hands the reins of government.

One of them, Tribigild, left the city, passed over to Asia Minor, called together the army in Phrygia, and marched in open rebellion towards Constantinople. Eutropius first endeavored to reach him by gold; but when he failed in this, he commanded the other, Gainas, who had remained in the city as if not concerned in the matter, to march against him. Gainas obeyed, passed over to Asia, but soon sent back the most alarming accounts of Tribigild's power and of the great danger which threatened:—“The rebels are not to be subdued by force.” When the Emperor became terrified by this, he made known to him, that but one resource was left;—Tribigild would submit, if the Emperor would dismiss his minister, and Eutropius retire from the administration. It was hard for the Emperor to do this, and he would not at first consent. But when the generals had spoken the word, and the troops went with them, the enemies of the man took courage and set in motion the body of the people. These assembled before the palace and demanded the deposition and—death of Eutropius. Yet the Emperor still clung to him. Eudoxia turned the scale. She had long since fallen out with the minister. His will did not always accord with her desires, and Eutropius had threatened her with the assertion, that as he had exalted, so he could humble her. Leading her two children she hastened to

Arcadius, cast herself weeping at his feet, and while the children also wept through sympathy with their mother, the heart of the Emperor gave way. He uttered the decisive word. Eutropius was deposed, and then given up to the vengeance of the enraged city and the troops of war.

And what did this man now do? His conduct is a remarkable confirmation of what is so often observed in life, that a pure and noble spirit is able, silently and unconsciously, to make a deep impression upon the heart of the worst of men. There often remains in the most hardened heart a point, where respect and faith and trust in the fidelity of a noble man yet live. Eutropius in his necessity fled into the church of Chrysostom; he betook himself to the protection of the man who had never flattered him, who had spoken to him as no other person the severest truth. Full of trust he prostrated himself at the altar of him, whom he had just before commanded not to protect those who came thither in peril.

He had remained several days at the altar, when Sunday dawned, and the whole city, having heard of the great event, pressed to the house of God, and as many as were able to find admittance stood looking up into the chancel, and awaiting the bishop. He finally appeared and ascended to his place. It was evidently one of the sublimest moments in the life of Chrysostom when he entered, and saw below the thousands, who were all waiting for his word, and at the altar the guilty Eutropius, smitten in his own heart.

Could he do more at this moment than pray in

silence and trembling? Could he open his mouth in the presence of this practical exhibition of the truth? Yea, he could and did speak.

"It is always in time, but at this hour more than ever, to cry: 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!' Where is the glory of this man? where, the splendor of that light which surrounded him? where, the jubilee of the multitude which applauded him? where, the cheers with which he was greeted when he appeared in the theatre or on the race-course? All gone! All gone! A sudden storm has swept off the leaves, laid bare the tree; the naked trunk stands indeed, though it is shaken even to the roots.—Where are all the friends who surrounded him, who worshipped his power and encircled it with a cloud of incense? It was a dream; and the night has passed, the morning breaks, the dream is over! It has fled like a shadow and like vapor, it has burst like a bubble. O vanity of vanities, all is vanity! Write it on all walls and garments and houses, in the market-place and the streets, but above all, write it in your consciences. We ever renew our trust in the tinsel of earthly glory, and ever afresh it deceives us. Say to every one, and at all times, at home and abroad, at table and in the theatre, let every one cry to his neighbor—All is vanity, all is vanity!"

Afterwards turning to Eutropius, he proceeded: "Said I not to thee, that money is a thankless servant, and thou wouldest not listen to me? Said I not, that wealth is a faithless friend? Thou wouldest not change. Behold now thou learnest that it is worse,—even a murderer. This it is which has brought thee

hither, that now thou standest in terror. The church, which thou hast so often assailed, has opened her bosom to receive thee. The theatre upon which thou hast bestowed honor, and for the sake of which thou hast so often committed sin, has betrayed thee" (thence arose the cry for his death); "the race-course after devouring thy wealth, has sharpened the sword of those whom thou hast there labored to amuse. But our sanctuary, which has so many times felt thine anger, covers thee with her wings.

"I say not this to triumph over the unfortunate, but to move those who yet enjoy prosperity to seek their true safety. Hearken to the word: 'All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.' Let the word of truth penetrate your hearts. *He* did not. Oh, had he lent his ear to the truth, he would not lie there."

He then assumed another tone. Great animosity reigned in the city, and the head of Eutropius was demanded. Men were enraged that this man should lie at the altar and be protected by the church.

Hence Chrysostom added: "This is the greatest triumph of the church, that she takes under her protection the enemy who is forsaken by all, and thus withstands the Emperor, the people, the whole city. One says, is it seemly for the worthless and rapacious criminal to lay his hand on the altar? Say not so. An impure and sinful woman embraced the feet of the Holy One! Will ye reproach the Saviour for permitting it? We rather, I believe, admire and praise His love. Think not of retribution,—eye for eye,—are we not the servants of Him who prayed

on the cross: ‘Father, forgive them?’ Say not, that by his laws he has deprived men of this refuge at the altar. He has now learned by experience the nature of his law, and has by his conduct revoked it. He now cries to all: Do no violence here, that you may never experience it in turn.”

The bishop succeeded in softening their hearts. He saw by the tears of many what was passing in their minds, and said:—

“ Come, let us fall at the feet of the Emperor, or rather entreat the most compassionate God to incline the Emperor’s heart to mercy. Many of you are soon to partake of our Lord’s body, and how can we utter the prayer, ‘forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,’ while we ask for vengeance upon the guilty? We deny not, that he has done great wrong, but this is neither the place nor time to execute judgment, but rather to show mercy. May no one of us indulge wrath or hatred in his heart! Let us all beseech the Lord who loveth men, to deliver him from death, and grant him time for self-examination and true repentance. And let us unitedly entreat the Emperor to give one man to our altar.”

The church agreed to the wishes of Chrysostom, but not so the troops in the city. Soon after his discourse was finished they drew near, surrounded the church, and demanded with cries and rage the surrender of Eutropius. The bishop firmly and boldly withstood them, and he would certainly have suffered himself to be cut down, sooner than give into their hands the guilty suppliant. The soldiers were afraid to press by force into the church, but Chrysostom

went among them, and accompanied them to the Emperor in the hope of obtaining a pardon for the culprit.

On the Sunday following this event Chrysostom said in the capital :—

“ A few days since the church was beleagured,— wild troops stormed around it, and swords were unsheathed. Ye heard their furious shouts, and saw the fire of their eyes ; yet no man was wounded and our church remained unhurt. At her gates war found a limit, and we stood within fearless of the soldiers’ rage. I was carried to the imperial court, but by the grace of God nothing could terrify me. We had for our sure pledge the word of the Lord : ‘ My church stands upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ Whoever desires help, let him seek the church ; yet I do not now mean the place nor the surrounding walls, but the God who dwells within these walls. The walls decay, but the church never changes ; the house may be seized by barbarians, yet Satan will not conquer the church. These are not words of boasting. How many have assailed the church, but her enemies have perished while she herself stands unvanquished. It is her divine nature to triumph in conflicts, and out of shame and reproach to become fairer and more glorious. Blows may cover her with wounds, but she possesses an ever healing energy. She may be borne hither and thither by the floods, but she never sinks.”

After the banishment of Eutropius quiet was not restored to the city. Those two generals, Tribigild and Gainas, now revealed more clearly their further

designs. Uniting their armies they threatened the city and pressed for the deposition of other high officers of state. They demanded in particular, that three men, who were at the head of the administration, should be given up to them, namely, Aurelian, Saturninus, and John, the private secretary of the Emperor. They were very different men from Eutropius, were highly respected, and rightfully enjoyed the love of all the better citizens. What was to be done? These noble men solved the difficult question, by declaring: "If by our death we can purchase peace for our native land and avert calamity, we are ready to suffer it," and going voluntarily into the camp of their enemies they gave themselves into their hands. When this was known all mourned and lamented, but they only mourned and lamented. Chrysostom acted. Leaving the city he passed over the sea, appeared before the generals, and was able to control them. Great power of spirit must have dwelt in the frail body of John. Gainas, unable to oppose him, promised to grant their lives to the three men, but they were not to return into the city.

When the bishop again entered his pulpit after this event, he said:—

"For a considerable time I have been silent here, though not from indolence or convenience. I have wandered about, as you know, to still the disquiet and allay the storm. I have admonished, prayed, and wept, that our three beloved officers might be saved. Now I am with you again. Having rescued them from the storm which had fallen upon them, I would fain strengthen you against the storms which still

threaten us. Of human concerns nothing is firm; they float upon a convulsed sea and are daily threatened with new shipwrecks. What the prophet says has been verified in our day: ‘let no one trust his neighbor; let no one put confidence in princes; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.’ It is an evil time. Brother betrayeth brother, there is no sure friend on whom a man may rely, true love is no more. Everywhere conflict and war, and not merely open war, we see round about us nothing but masks; one lives more securely among enemies than among friends. And why is all this? I have often declared it to you, the love of money, a passion for wealth and gain.”

Chrysostom in this discourse speaks of storms which still threatened, and with reason; for although the two generals now concluded a peace with the Emperor, Gainas soon interrupted it, and bloody contests followed. We will not, however, pursue further the history of these events, since Chrysostom was less concerned with them, but follow him in labor upon a totally different field.

X.

CHRYSSOTOM'S SOLICITUDE FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE HEATHEN.

WE have thus far noticed the labors of our bishop among those who belonged to his own church; but his vision and his activity reached much further, and even beyond the whole body of Christians. He took an interest in the heathen far and near, and exerted himself efficiently in their behalf. Let us trace this part of his work.

Occupying in Constantinople a high position as bishop and having the control of important resources, he was able to engage in large enterprises for the good of pagans. Yet in Antioch at an earlier day he had been active in this direction. It is proper in this place, where the general subject is presented, to go back and speak somewhat of those former efforts.

We have learned that there was a very large number of Christians in Antioch; but along with these and in the adjacent country, there was also a great mass of heathen. These were of every class and of every sort. Not confined to the lower orders and the rabble, many there were among the cultivated who

could not receive Christianity and were fully conscious of the grounds of this inability. When the Christians gloried in a Divine, saving power and a holy cause, they found this by no means confirmed by the character and life of Christians at that time, and plainly saw that many of them were no better than the heathen. Hence they inferred the faith of Christians to be an empty boast resting upon no important reality. Moreover they recoiled from the thing itself, or at least, from the form in which it had appeared. Accustomed to beauty of language and delineation in their old writers, orators, poets, and rendered fastidious thereby, they were repelled by the simple, plain, unadorned garb in which the Bible, written by fishermen and publicans, came to their door, and they failed to penetrate within and behold the Divine glory. Just as the Jews once thought no good thing could come out of Nazareth, and were unable to perceive the expected King of Israel in a carpenter's son, who once stood at the joiner's bench and afterwards ate and drank with publicans and sinners, so also now those who have formed their taste from the study of Göethe and Schiller, or Heine and Börne, are often disgusted with the New Testament.

Chrysostom did all he could to win such men, and also advised the members of his flock not to lose their care for them. But what measures did he recommend? We will give his own words, for thus we shall be enabled to look far into the soul of this man which was enlightened and pervaded by the spirit of Christ.

“If we are in the society of eminent and cultivated heathen, let us not be ashamed of our faith, but frankly confess it. If they laud their religion and slander ours, let us not keep silence and timidly allow it to pass, but depict heathenism in its actual shame, and praise the glory of Christianity. As the Emperor always bears the diadem upon his head, so let us everywhere carry about the confession of our faith. The crown cannot so adorn the Emperor, as do confession and faith the Christian.

“The pagans are to be conquered more by our conduct than by our words, the proper and effectual weapon to be used against them is a holy life. Although we utter the most beautiful words and celebrate Christianity in the most brilliant speeches, unless we are better than the heathen in our lives, nothing will be gained ; they may hear our words, but they will see our works. If you speak of the value of future and heavenly things and live for those of earth, as if hoping for nought beyond, your conduct, and not your language, will find its way into the soul of the pagan. If you say, our religion is a religion of love and at the same time render evil for evil, how can they have confidence in your faith ? If they behold you mourning inconsolably for a deceased friend, how can they believe your account of a resurrection ? Are we not at fault in this ? Here lies the reason why so many pagans now reject Christianity.

“It was otherwise in the first church. Every thing was vital in the apostles, and hence they accomplished such great results. We might now work even as they, and without journeying over land and sea. We

can remain at home and yet perform great deeds. Hast thou not relatives, friends, family, domestics? Live with them as a Christian, and the power of Christ will pass over from you upon them, and enter their hearts."

" Couldst thou raise the dead, thou wouldst not have such influence upon the heathen as a man who is full of the Christian spirit and life. They stare at the miracle with their eyes, while the life penetrates heart and soul; that occurs for once, but this works perpetually. 'The heavens'—have no words which our ears can hear, and yet they—'declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.' We have more than the firmament and the stars of heaven above us. Point not the pagan to those, but let him see the new creation which Christ has wrought, how He has transformed men living after the flesh into angels of God. A truly devout man, though destitute of wit or skill for high discourse, enlightens and warms the heart, so that those who associate with him must praise the Father in heaven."

" Enter not into dispute," he proceeds, with " persons whose heart is not yet susceptible, who feel no need of the great and holy works of God; nor attempt by manifold proofs to convince their understanding and persuade them, that God has become man in Christ. This is a matter of faith, and while their mind is alien to the truth, they will only mock and deride you."

Chrysostom once heard, that a Christian, in reply to a pagan who appealed to his philosophers, writers,

and poets, endeavored to prove, that Paul was as learned and could express his thoughts as elegantly and beautifully as Plato himself. Chrysostom censured this because it was untrue, and showed that in this very thing is Christianity great and convincing, namely, that men unlearned in the schools could work with such power and might. “For God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”

“When I came to you,” says Paul, “I came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (1 Cor. ii. 1, 4, 5.)

“The confidence and good-will of pagans,” says Chrysostom at another time, “we must seek to win; and this we shall accomplish, by doing them no wrong, and also by being ready to suffer wrong from them. Let us live with them as fathers do with their children.” “A dislike of the heathen was infused into the minds of the Jews under the old covenant, in order that the latter, while yet weak, might not enter into connection with the former. But we stand on a higher platform, we ought not to cherish hatred but rather sympathy, being ever ready to receive them. If a physician harshly repulses the sick, can the latter possess confidence and courage to be healed by the former? But thou desirest to heal and help,—nothing wins with such power as love. Let

this be shown, and then first his love will be secured. When thou goest to him, do not immediately overwhelm him with thy faith ; make him first thy true friend, and then gradually let him know the treasures which thou hast for him, and which are so much more precious than thou art thyself. Love is the great master, and has all power,—even to make children of God from stones. Wouldst thou know its power, give a rude, mean, hard man, into the arms of love, lead him into her school, and thou shalt learn what she is able to effect."

These were the principles which Chrysostom would have observed in the treatment of pagans. They could be directly applied in the city, where pagans and Christians lived in daily intercourse with each other. But in other cases special arrangements must be made for the work, and Chrysostom was prompt to begin and to call upon others for coöperation. Let us first listen to his admonition on this point. On a Sunday in Constantinople, he observed among his hearers some who possessed large estates in the vicinity, or at a distance from the city. Christianity had spread little in the country, more regard was paid to the cities, and many Christian landlords even favored paganism, because they derived advantage from it in consequence of the remaining temples, idol-worship, and sacrifices.

"Many," he says, "own estates in the country and do not trouble themselves how Christianity is treated upon them. They are solicitous for the building of baths and barns and for the increase of rents, but not for the souls of their dependents. If you find thorns

and weeds in your field, you burn or root them up, in order to improve the land; but weeds in the heart and life of men you suffer to grow undisturbed! Do you not fear the householder, to whom you must render account? Ought not every landlord to build a church, install a teacher, and coöperate with him? How can the peasant be expected to become a Christian, if he sees you, his Christian lord, so little anxious for the salvation of his soul? I entreat you, I admonish you, nay I prescribe it as a law, that no landlord be without a church. Tell me not: there is a church in the neighborhood, or it will cost too much, I have not sufficient property. Is the expense so great? Build at first but a house or a hall; your successor will enlarge it, adding ornament and beauty, pillars and porticos. Look not at the fact of its bringing no gain to you; is it no gain to gather souls into the heavenly garner? Will you think only of the fruits and barns upon earth? Ah! such an one considers not how precious it is to win souls; but we *know* it. Let us begin this spiritual work, but with earnestness and zeal, not as a subordinate matter. And can I render any assistance? Only call upon me, each one of you, and I will do as much for the work, as lies in my power. Had I led forward my people here so far that they were in no more need of me, I would gladly go out into the country and there preach the Gospel."

The calling of a country preacher had great attractions for him. "How excellent is it," said he in the same discourse, "thus to be a pastor in the country. After the example of Abraham he plants his garden,

his fields, he digs and sows with his people, and on the morrow he stands as God's representative in their midst and scatters seed from above into their hearts."

He then describes the blessing which would in manifold respects accrue to the landlords from the church and the labor of a preacher. Their farmers would become new men, there would be fewer trespasses, affrays, thefts, and the poor, hitherto neglected people would enjoy Christian consolation in affliction and be thankful to their landlord for the new treasure which he had procured for them.

He must also have been perfectly aware, how this seemed to the hearts of many great lords, for to accomplish his object he appealed to yet other impulses. He intimated to them, e. g., that the names of such benefactors would be now and hereafter specially mentioned in the prayers of the church.

We know not the effect of these admonitions upon the men addressed; yet we do know that the bishop not merely exhorted others, but when it was possible took the business in hand himself. For example, the conversion of the heathen in Phœnicia proceeded from him. The people of that region were living in a vile idolatry, which was connected with revolting excesses. A description of them would lay open to our gaze the hideous depths of paganism. The people clung to these things and the priests defended their gods with great zeal. But difficulties did not deter Chrysostom. He chose a number of pious and able monks, drew them to himself, and after preparing them further for the work, sent them thither. They had a difficult post, and seemed for a

long time to labor in vain. Chrysostom left them not in the hour of need, but stood by them with advice and aid, sending them letters and fresh assistants whom he had carefully selected. And when they were attacked, persecuted, and ill treated, he invoked and secured the help of the state authorities. Eutropius himself, when at the helm, readily performed his wishes. This vain and sanctimonious man was pleased to encircle himself with the glory of a defender of the church and a promoter of her enterprises, so long as he was not thereby prevented from carrying out his other designs and from gratifying his passions. The bishop also received permission to cut down the forests of the land, in whose dark recesses the idol temples were built and deeds of shame were perpetrated. This was a great work, but Chrysostom carried it through, and to meet the expense he was obliged neither to claim the assistance of the state nor to draw from the church fund. He received whatever was necessary from Olympias and other wealthy females. While he lived, even after he had lost his office as bishop and was himself in great affliction, by self-denial and self-sacrifice he labored on with even more fidelity for the mission in Phœnicia. We shall return to this point in the course of our narrative. Let us now consider his labors for the people of the German race—a matter of special interest to us. He bore them on his heart;—but did he accomplish any thing for them? So much at least, that in his church, and pulpit, and place, and presence, a German preached in the German language. I will relate the occurrence.

It has been already stated that the Germans, who dwelt in the region north of the empire, had for a considerable time been in contact with the Greeks and Romans ; — with the Greeks, that tribe of the German people, in particular, calling themselves Goths. They had formerly waged severe conflicts with each other, but more recently whole troops of the rough, sound, able, and brave Goths had been taken as mercenaries into the Roman army. Christians captured in war, and several of these mercenaries who had become acquainted with Christianity and embraced it and afterwards returned to their countrymen, had scattered many a good seed, so that the cause of God was there no longer wholly unknown. Chrysostom, however, was not satisfied with this, but sent out missionaries among the Goths, as well as the Phoenicians, and chose them in this case also from the cloisters. And more ; the practical wisdom of the bishop is shown by the fact, that even then he fell upon the thought of preparing some of the young Goths then resident in Constantinople to be teachers of their countrymen. The attempt was made, and after a suitable time he assigned to his young Gothic preachers a small church in the city. Here he caused them to exercise in preaching on the Sabbath and to conduct Divine service for the Goths who resided in the capital. Nay, he often went there himself and preached, — certainly in Greek, while his sermon was translated by one familiar with both languages.

On a certain Sabbath he took one of his young

Gothic friends into his own church and pulpit, to read and explain a portion of the Bible in his native language. We can easily imagine the surprise of the assembly, and that many of the Greeks, cultivated by polite learning and proud of their own beautiful language, may have been offended at the harsh tones of his voice. But there was no escape, they must hear the Gothic sermon to its close. Chrysostom then rose and said, that he had desired by this example to set before them the power of Christ and Him crucified. “Where are the doctrines of Plato, Pythagoras, and the great men of Athens? They have perished. And the doctrines of fishermen, publicans, and tent-makers? Not only among the Jews and Greeks, but also in the language of barbarians, as you have this day heard, they shine clear as the sun. Scythians and Thracians, Sauromatians and Moors, and those who inhabit the remotest parts of the earth, have received this doctrine into their language, and from it have learned true wisdom. Wherever thou goest, thou wilt find the names of these fishermen in every mouth. The power of the Crucified has opened the way for them everywhere, has made the ignorant wise, and has given to the unlearned a greater power of speech than is possessed by the masters of language.

“Let no one therefore esteem it a dishonor to the church, that we have invited barbarians to speak in this place; for it is an honor to the church and a proof of her power. ‘There is no speech or language,’ said the prophet, ‘where their voice is not heard.’

And another: ‘The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb; the lion shall eat straw like the ox.’ Is not this here fulfilled? Ye see one from the wildest of men standing with the lambs of the church; there is one pasture, one fold for all; one table, one altar is set before all.

XI.

CHYSOSTOM AND THE SECTS.

THERE were at that time sects or denominations, whose belief differed from that of the general church, and who consequently withdrew from the same and maintained separately the worship of God. Sharp conflicts had already been waged between them and the church. They had persecuted and anathematized each other by turns. Chrysostom came in contact with such sects both in Antioch and in Constantinople, and it will be at once interesting and instructive to hear his thoughts upon this matter, to learn how he spoke and acted with reference to them.

He was milder and more tolerant than most of his contemporaries, and he often expressed this feeling. He opposed, to be sure, those who would infer from the words of Paul in Romans xiv. 5: "let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind," that one's *faith* is a matter of indifference, provided his *actions* are right. He showed that the passage had no reference to this point, and that the idea is false; but he knew the difference between a living faith, a hearty

surrender of the soul to Christ, and through Him to God, and the *conceptions*, the *intellectual views* which we have of God and Christ. He by no means undervalued these, and often warned the weak to be on their guard against teachers of error, and to withdraw from their society; but knowing that distinction, he could pronounce judgment upon devious opinions with mildness, and was free from the narrow-minded severity which is often shown at this point. He was conscious of the inadequacy of *all* human *conceptions* of Divine things, of the limits to *all* human thought, and therefore he could suffer men to make representations unlike his own, of that which cannot be perfectly represented.

On one occasion he delivered a sermon in Antioch expressly against “Anathematizing teachers of error,” and said among other things:—

“Tell me, what is the design of the Gospel of grace? Wherefore did the Son of God appear on earth? That we should fiercely persecute and devour one another? I suppose the Gospel claims of us still more than the law of Moses; yet in the law it is written, ‘thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,’ while in the Gospel we are required to bless our enemies.”

He then relates the parable of the good Samaritan, and adds:—

“Our Saviour called neither the priest nor the Levite ‘neighbor,’ but the Samaritan, who was thrust out by the Jews on account of his religious belief, a stranger who cherished many erroneous opinions. He was called ‘neighbor,’ because he had compassion in

his soul. Thus the Son of God denominated him, and the same spirit did He inculcate by pouring out His own blood for His enemies. If He did this, and the church after the model given by Him, daily prays for all men, how canst thou say ‘Anathema?’ Knowest thou what it signifies? ‘Let him be accursed!’ that is, rejected of Christ and given over unto Satan, without hope of heaven.

“ Instruct thine opponent with gentleness, if God peradventure will give him repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. Spread out the net of love, that whoever has fallen into error may not be lost, but restored and healed. If he enters, he shall live, and thou hast saved a soul; if not, if he abides obstinately by his opinion, testify to him that thou art free from all responsibility; but do this in love and patience, lest the Judge hereafter demand his soul of thee. And if he is not profited, it is of great advantage to thee—to love and to act as a disciple of Christ.

“ When Paul came to the Athenians and saw them all given up to the madness of idolatry, he did not begin with reproaches, he did not say: you are godless men,—you esteem every thing God and you deny the only true God; but he said: ‘As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, *To the Unknown God*. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.’ O paternal love! He declares of idolaters, that they worship the true God. Wherefore? Because with a pious disposition they performed their religious service. I call upon you and upon myself

to follow this example. We shall wish in vain to look through that which is hidden, and to anticipate the Eternal Judge, who alone discerns the amount of knowledge and the extent of faith belonging to each one."

To be more specific: there were two sects in particular with which he came in conflict, the Eunomians and the Novatians. We will speak of both.

1. THE EUNOMIANS.¹—(*Sufficiency of faith.*)

These he had met in Antioch, and he found them again in Constantinople. Together with the Arians

¹ *Eunomius*, who gave name to this sect, was son of a farmer in Dacora, near Mount Argæus. He received his first instruction from his father during the leisure afforded to husbandmen by the cold of winter. While a youth he became the pupil and amanuensis of *Aetius*, an Arian distinguished for his philosophical and theological knowledge. In the year 360 he received from the Arian party the bishopric of Cyzicus, in Mysia, but soon lost this office, and thereupon passed some time in retirement near Chalcedon. From this place he was banished by Theodosius to Galmyris, in Moesia, and thence to Cæsaria, in Cappadocia. At length he was permitted to take up his residence on the paternal estate at Dacora.

Ennomius was a far abler man than Arius. An acute dialectician and skilful polemic, he followed out his principles to their logical consequences. "His character was all of a piece," says Neander. A foe to mysticism he refused belief in every thing above the reach of his intellect. Socrates has recorded the following as his language: "God Himself knows no more respecting His nature than do we,—whatever He knows of Himself exists also unchanged in us." When it was objected to his view, that sin has darkened the human soul and rendered it incapable of perfectly comprehending a holy God, he replied: "Although the spirit of a *single person* is darkened, so that he knows

who had led the way, though with less decision, they had quite recently been a powerful and wide spread party, threatening great injury to the Christian church and her faith; and hence the opposition to it had been of right very earnest. This party was now, however, in the territories of the Emperor, on the decrease; yet there was still need of labor against it, and Chrysostom took part in that labor.

But what kind of people were these? They did not believe, it is commonly said, that the Son of God became man in the person of Christ, but affirmed that a created spirit, though the first and the highest, dwelt in Him. And this was indeed their opinion. But still more was concealed beneath it; for it was grounded in the whole tendency and state of mind which characterized them.

They said, we must have clear ideas upon every point,—and certainly with right,—they laid great stress upon logical thought. This we must commend, for clear conceptions, discriminating thought, are exceedingly precious; we should receive no opinion without careful reflection. Whoever has a talent for thinking, let him not rest, but press as deeply and keenly as possible into every subject. But if we do this, without suffering ourselves to be deceived by any interest dear to us, we always come back to the

nothing, not even that which lies at his feet or floats over his head, it by no means follows, that *other* men cannot arrive at a knowledge of the essence of things.” Christianity was designed, in his opinion, to minister light and not warmth to the human soul. He might as well have denied all warmth to the rays of the sun, on the plea, that this asserted warmth was invisible.—Trs.

point from which we started, to a point where we can no further *explain* or trace the object of study, but only *perceive* and *recognize* it,—it is what it is. In this way every *individual* being stands before us, and especially the *omnipresent Life*, the living, creating Power. This cannot be explained. It is as it is, and we must accept the mystery unsolved.

But these men would not do this, they thought it necessary and believed it possible to trace and explain and *comprehend* all things divine as well as earthly, and they asserted, that only when one has thus apprehended objects are they any thing to him, he has nothing to do with that which he is unable to understand. With clear insight on the part of man, each object comes to the exercise of its legitimate influence upon him.

So they thought at that time, and so do many think at the present day, unable to imagine even that they are mistaken.

But let us reflect:—

I stand before a rose-bush. Beautiful colors and fragrant odors delight my senses. Have I no concern with the flowers before me? Does not their nature, by means of form, color, and fragrance, affect me? Of this there cannot be a doubt. But how? Do I understand or know what the odor is, or how it originates, or whence the color, or by what process the rose is developed and formed? I may be ignorant on all these points, and yet there exists a connection, living and active, between me and the peculiar nature of the rose,—I experience, and know by experience, what it is.

Now would it not be perfect folly for me to say: before I can yield myself to the beauty and fragrance of these flowers, I must comprehend and know, how they have come into being with their peculiar nature and influence?

The naturalist, the chemist, the philosopher may reflect upon this, and by research and analysis may learn much; but after all they cannot say *why* and *how the rose is a rose* and not a lily,—there it is with its own appropriate nature, and their knowledge can reach no further. What this is, the peculiar life in the rose, cannot be expressed or conceived; it can only be seen or known by the senses.

Besides, however much the learned may know, they do not therefore see the beauty of the rose or inhale its sweetness any more than I, although ignorant; nay, it is possible that I may have a much keener sense and clearer eye than they.

The sight and seizure of objects on the one hand, and the comprehension of them on the other, are two wholly different processes, independent of each other, and affected by different organs. I may enjoy much of an object without understanding it, and may understand it without having any part of it.

So of matters of faith in our own day. On the one side it is said,—the Christ of the Bible, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, is incomprehensible, and therefore of no consequence to us; and on the other hand, some believe that logical definitions and established formularies are almost necessary to our interest in Him. The same error on both sides! Peter said: “Lord, to whom shall we go,

Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," and John: "He dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth." We may study, indeed, but we need not wait for the result, in order to *believe* and through faith to *obtain spiritual life*.

Let us now return to the Eunomians in Antioch and Constantinople. They believed it necessary to understand the nature of Jesus Christ in order to have an interest in Him. But upon reflection they found the doctrine of the church, that "God was present in Him," incomprehensible, and therefore rejected it. And what then? They taught, that the highest of angels and the first of all creatures assumed flesh and blood in the person of Christ. This opinion they believed themselves able to understand.

But to us it seems far from rational. To comprehend the presence of God, the Eternal Spirit, in Christ, to form an adequate conception of it as of other and earthly things, is evidently impossible; yet if Christ by conduct and word testifies: "God liveth in me and I in God," then my spirit can freely bow in worship before Him. On the other hand we find it extremely difficult to entertain the thought, that a mighty angel, a creature who once lived in heaven, entered the womb of Mary and was born.

To them it was easy, and they imagined that every thing was thus made plain. Their speculations, however, were by no means discriminating. Nevertheless

they gloried in their reason, and bitterly reproached those who affirmed divine things to be above the comprehension of our limited faculties.

They went so far as to declare the assertion of God's incomprehensibility unchristian. What is our holy religion, they said, but a revelation of God? Yet if God is incomprehensible He has not been revealed, and Christianity has brought us no good. According to their view, the Christian revelation is addressed to the understanding of man, and consists of disclosures respecting the infinite nature of God, in the communication of dogmas or doctrines; while in fact that which has been given us is the living person of Jesus Christ, the redemption purchased by Him, and the divine life issuing from Him.

Such were the Eunomians, with whom Chrysostom came in contact. Let us observe the way in which he treated and opposed them.

"Long ago," said he, when opening a series of discourses in Antioch concerning them, "long ago I felt myself impelled to address you on this subject; but I deferred the matter, because I saw that many, afflicted by this disease, were ready to hear the Word of God in our assemblies. Hoping to win them, I refrained from these controversies, lest they might be frightened away from the truth. But since I have been called out by themselves, I will now boldly lay hold of those weapons which are able to cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. I lay hold of them, however, not to cast down opposers but to lift up the

fallen. And this is the nature of Christian weapons, that they smite the contentious, while in love they heal such as seek for the truth."

He discoursed in a similar strain on the first Sabbath of his ministry in Constantinople. He warned the Church against the influence of this party, and promised never to lose sight of it; but at the same time he declared his purpose to conduct this warfare in Christian love and with spiritual weapons. Chrysostom had a special object in saying this. For here in the capital had been much strife, characterized by mental vigor and acuteness rather than by moral earnestness and holy motives. The Greeks were always fond of debate, and they now disputed about the depths of the Godhead, as if by intellectual acumen they could elucidate such mysteries. It had become a matter of discussion at table, in taverns, and upon the market-place, whether Christ was the Son of God or was a created angel.

With reference to these things, Chrysostom remarked:—

"I will contend, yet not like Goliath, the Philistine, but like David, the man of God. The former was girded with armor made by the hand of man, the latter was strong in faith; the one glittered in shield and coat of mail, the other shone by the light of the Spirit and Divine grace. Hence the lad conquered the man, the smooth stone of the brook shattered the brazen helmet of the warrior. Still it was not the mere stone which smote the giant, it was the invisible power of God present with David and directing the stone in its course. Let us also contend with

spiritual weapons, not with carnal, nor with human vanity."

That God is omnipresent we all assume, but how He is, or can be such, I know not. That His existence is without beginning or end, we all agree, but how there can be One, who has not been brought into existence by himself or by another, I am not able to conceive. You concede that God is a spirit,—what then is "spirit?" Can you form any idea of a pure, infinite Spirit? Be not deceived, you no sooner begin to do this, than you confine it within finite limits, and your spirit is no more purely spiritual.

You assert, that the world was *created* by the word of God, but can you conceive of this, conceive that something be thus produced from nothing? *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, say the philosophers, and you affirm that the world came from non-existence into being. Here then is a work of faith independent of reason.

And whoever will admit nothing which is beyond and above his understanding, will, unless deceived by obscure and false conceptions, lose every thing, even God himself, the eternal ground and reason of things.

Thus thought Chrysostom respecting this much debated point; but his thoughts were rejected by many of his opponents. The Eunomians continued as a sect for a considerable period, and earnestly endeavored to win adherents. They made public processions through the streets of the city, praying meanwhile and chanting songs in which their views were clearly expressed. Then the friends of the bishop, by his advice, likewise formed processions and caused their songs to resound through the city,

while the Empress paid all necessary expenses, and gave them splendid silver crosses provided with wax tapers. Her chamberlain, Brison, led the processions. This was evidently a wrong measure, many collisions took place in the streets, and both parties were required to desist. The Eunomians, who held public worship only in the suburbs, afterwards desired one of the principal churches for that purpose. The bishop then believed it his duty to oppose them, and they were therefore compelled to retain their previous locality, until as a separate body of Christians they gradually disappeared.

2. THE NOVATIANS.—(*Church-discipline.*)

This sect derived its name from its founder Novatian, who lived about 150 years before Chrysostom. They were hence not of yesterday, and had already brought much discord and controversy into the church. These persons were exceedingly strict, and not only stood aloof from the world but separated from the main body of the church and formed a distinct communion which they called the “*pure church*,” and themselves, the “*pure*.”

They held that a Christian who, after his baptism, had committed any gross sin and on account of this had been excluded from church fellowship, ought not, though he should repent and reform, to be again admitted to the church and the altar. Whether God will forgive and accept such an one, they indeed would not decide, but the church and its ministers

ought not to pronounce over him the words, “thy sins are forgiven thee,” nor extend to him again the sacrament. Should a church do this and suffer such sinners in its midst, it is not the true church. Hence they had separated and now strictly maintained this discipline in their communion, and called themselves the “pure church.”

These persons in their views had thus an affinity with those who regard the institution of the church as of more consequence than its members, and to whom the glory of the church in its totality upon earth is dearer than the salvation of individual souls. If they were asked whether it was Christ’s special design in establishing a church on earth, to exhibit thereby the Divine glory to the world or to bring men to God and heaven? they would answer: both,—the latter by means of the former. Were they, however, strictly honest, they would nevertheless assign to the former the first place, and should the two come into collision, they would, as they actually did, sacrifice the individual members of the church in order to preserve the church itself uncontaminated. Advocates of these views have often appeared, but Chrysostom was not one of them. To restore an erring soul again to God, he cheerfully granted it a place in the church, although he saw that by such a course the church must lose a measure of its glory.

And how, since he was guided by the Bible, could he do otherwise? He knew how the apostles, how Paul, for example, proceeded in the church at Corinth. When that man (2 Cor. ii. 1-10) who had been guilty of a grave offence was brought to sincere

repentance, the apostle, moved with love to him now subdued in “godly sorrow,” requested that he should be received again into the church, and announced to him in the name of Christ, the forgiveness of his sin. Chrysostom knew how the Apostle John went after that young man who, falling into the most criminal ways, became the leader of a band of robbers, and brought him back to the church.

Accordingly he felt obliged to oppose the principle on which the sect of the Novatians was founded, and the manner in which he spoke out against the pride especially, which would seem to be manifested in their calling themselves the pure, shows us that there was in them not merely the appearance but the reality of pride.

“The Apostle Paul,” he said in a sermon, “who sped as with wings over land and sea, who converted so many nations to Christ, to whom was revealed the depths of divine truth, who was caught up to the third heaven,—did he venture to say of himself, I belong to the pure? On the contrary, he affirmed that he was not worthy to be called an apostle, and speaks of himself as an untimely birth. What pride, what madness is this! Thou a man and callest thyself pure? Should one call himself pure and free from sin, it were the same as saying that the sea is free from waves; for as the sea is never without waves, so are we mortals never without sin. A thousand passions have polluted thee, a thousand-fold defilement cleaves to thee, and thou darest affirm that in a sea of impure waves thou art pure! Who is there that can say even at the close of a single day,

he has been pure ? Though he may not have committed what we term gross sins, yet has not vanity overtaken him and pride ensnared him ? has he not hated his enemy or envied his friend ?

“ And they call themselves pure ? — I admonish you to keep aloof from such pride and to strive with all earnestness to purify yourselves from the evil which still cleaves to you.”

This certainly was sharply spoken ; nay, it may be, that the bishop in opposing the pride and severity of this people, occasionally became passionate and violent. He, too, was not pure, and, when excited, often uttered some word which he afterwards regretted, and in this way he sometimes offended and provoked others.

Thus it was reported among the Novatians that he had said :—

“ If you sin, there is help ; if you sin again, only repent, and though you fall a thousand times, if you a thousand times repent, the church of Christ again receives you.”

Whether these are the bishop’s words is uncertain ; for in times of controversy especially, when the people are divided into parties, much is reported which the preacher does not say. Yet if he expressed himself thus inadvertently, very much still depends upon the connection and manner in which it was spoken, and every thing depends upon the meaning he designed to convey. And certainly a man of his moral earnestness can only have wished to say : We give no man up ; there is forgiveness with God and His church even for him who has fallen the lowest, if he repent.

But no regard was paid to the character of the man or the meaning of his expression. There were his words, and these were circulated throughout the city, and were seized upon by Sisinnius, the leader of the Novatians.

This man, if we may trust appearances, did not belong to the honest and serious minded portion of the church. Wholly contrary to the former manner of this sect, he was a good friend with many nobles and with the worldly-minded clergy of the city, and he knew how to live with and please the world by his talent for jest and wit; but his preaching was, in the spirit of his sect, strict and severe. He had been unfriendly to the bishop for some time past, now he embraced the opportunity, furnished by the bishop's reputed views of sin, and wrote a book against him, in which he severely censured that expression and his sermons generally, and gave utterance to his long pent-up feelings of animosity.

Chrysostom was not disturbed at this; he knew why he had assailed the distinctive principle of the Novatians, and defended that of the church.

Let us, however, not misunderstand the bishop. Because he rejected the church-discipline of the Novatians, as partaking of pride and a merciless spirit, it does not follow that he rejected discipline generally, and with a sickly forbearance, in disregard of the claims of Christ and the church, would have quietly endured in her communion that which was unchristian in life and doctrine.

We shall learn in the following section, how earnestly and sternly he proceeded against a circle of

unworthy bishops, deposing them as unfit to exercise their office in the Christian church. We will now hear how, on one occasion, he proceeded against some disorderly members of the church. The circumstance has already been alluded to in the seventh section.

After holding in solemn stillness a special divine service on Friday and Saturday of the week before Easter, some members of the church engaged in several noisy amusements, and particularly in the disorderly Circensian games, and so conducted themselves that any one with the least remains of moral feeling must have been shocked. On the following Sunday, the bishop ascended his pulpit, and after depicting in strong colors what had happened, he inquired: "Is this to be endured? Can this in a Christian church be passed over with impunity?" and called on the church themselves to decide.

He then said:—

"Think not that they are only as a few worthless sheep who have gone astray. Were their number only ten or five or even two—did not the Good Shepherd leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that *one* which was lost? Yes, were there but one soul, it is yet the soul of a man whom God so loved that He gave his only begotten Son that he might not perish. Will you not do all in your power that he may win eternal life? When thou goest hence, seek for him and try to lead him back."

"If he attends not to your entreaties or my admonitions, *then will I use the power which God has*

granted me—not to destroy men's souls but to save them.

“I declare unto you, and I speak it plainly, if any one notwithstanding all these entreaties and exhortations, again participates in those shameful and soul-destroying games, I will close against him the bars of the church, and withhold from him the holy supper.

“A good shepherd separates the diseased sheep from the sound ones,—such also is my duty. If in former times the leper, though a king, was forced, in spite of crown and purple, to retire without the city walls, how can such men now be permitted to remain in the church of Christ? I have entreated, I have exhorted, I have warned,—if all this is ineffectual, then must I sever from the body its corrupt members.

“It is now a year since my call to this city, and from that time, as you know, I have with words incessantly fought against the vice of unchastity; now I must employ other weapons. I have neither sword nor fire,—yet despise not my weapons. I have the office, and this office has its power.

“*Let such offenders be excluded from the fellowship of Christians!*

“You tremble at this judgment; I see some there smiting their breasts, I hear them sigh!—If they repent who have sinned, then shall the sentence be removed; for as I have received power to bind, so have I power to release. Our intention is not to separate the members from the body of Christ, but to rid the church of its disgrace.

“The very heathen now mock at us, and the Jews deride us when we, calling ourselves the holy Christian church, allow such disgrace. If, however, we exercise discipline, they shall humble themselves in reverence before the church and her institutions.

“Come to my assistance,—withdraw from such men, suffer them not in your society, avoid them in the market,—thus will their consciences be touched.

“As the hunters, when they would take wild animals, surround them at every quarter, so let us, from all sides, you from yours, and I from mine, surround these wild men, that we may catch them in the net of salvation. Will you leave me alone and not work with me? Consider well what you do;—if in my house gold and silver are stolen, and you see it, should you keep silence? If you allow the thief to escape, you become partakers of his sin. So is it here,—God says: thou lettest my church be robbed of its chastity, and permittest the robber to hasten to the abode of Satan, and dost thou keep silence and fold thy hands in indifference?

“Yet whatever you may choose, I know what I have to do. I am responsible for every soul,—and, whether you keep silence and close your eyes, or whether you speak against me and become enraged, I shall so act that I may be pure from the blood of all men, and be able to stand without fear before the judgment-seat of God.”

Such language and action sounds indeed to many ears in our day, harsh and injurious; even the bare

mention of church-discipline now occasions a shudder. Perhaps the reason of this is found in the abuse of discipline as formerly practised, especially by individuals. The right of discipline should never be lodged in the hands of any one person. But when the church of Christ by her authority ceases to discipline, i. e. to educate her members; when she leaves every one to himself, to live, act, and teach as he pleases, then the church of Christ must be dissolved, just as any society falls asunder when its members act out their own pleasure, and all authority and order come to an end. The body falls to decay when the spirit has departed.

But Chrysostom, as we have said, knew the Bible, and therefore rejected the principle of the Novatians; he knew the Bible and therefore adhered to discipline. For the same apostle who requested that the deeply fallen, but now penitent man should be restored, had on a previous occasion required the church in the name of Christ to exclude him from their fellowship, when they, without discipline, would have retained him (1 Cor. v. 1-5). And the same apostle, even the beloved disciple, who went after that young man, yet writes (2 John, 8-10): Look to yourselves that we lose not those things which we have wrought. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house neither bid him God speed.

Nay, the Saviour himself says,—if he neglect to

hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. (Matt. xviii. 17.)

Chrysostom knew all this, and therefore held to discipline in the *church*. Let us now hear how he exercised it towards the unworthy *bishops*.

XII.

PROCEDURE OF CHRYSOSTOM TOWARDS THE UNWORTHY CLERGY.

WE have learned that Chrysostom, soon after entering upon his office in the capital, had to proceed against several of his subordinate clergy, and at that time deposed two persons, one for licentiousness and the other for murder. In the latter half of his pastorate in Constantinople he was obliged to sit in judgment on a large number of bishops. This unhappy affair not only occupied three months of his time and caused him much anxiety and sorrow, but was also attended with more lasting consequences, since in those bishops and their adherents it augmented the number of his enemies, and was thus the means of gathering the storm which afterwards burst upon him.

In May of the year 400, soon after the disturbances occasioned by Gainas and Tribigild, he had convened many of his bishops from Asia Minor, Galatia, and Thrace, at the capital, to consult with them in council upon the interests of the church, and to devise such changes as appeared necessary. As they were met together one Sabbath morning with him, in

order to proceed in company to the church, Eusebius, bishop of Valentinopolis, in Lydia, though not one of the council, appeared before them and presented Chrysostom an accusation against his superior, the bishop Antoninus, of Ephesus, who was present as a member of the council.

The paper contained a series of heavy charges;— Antoninus has melted down the sacred vessels and given the silver to his son. He has removed the marble which adorned the baptistery of the church, to his own private bath. He has ornamented his dining hall with beautiful pillars belonging to the church. His son, though guilty of murder, he has employed in the service of the church. He has sold estates which were presented to the church and kept the money himself. He has made it his practice to sell ecclesiastical offices to the highest bidder, and several of the clergy present at the council have acquired their office through him in this way.

Chrysostom, who knew the impetuous character of the man, perceived that he was excited with passion, and, after looking a moment at the writing, besought him to desist from his accusation.

“Brother Eusebius,” he said, “it is an easy thing when one is angry to utter charges, but it is often more difficult afterwards to prove them. Take heed and divulge not this matter. If the bishop has injured you, I will hereafter attempt to settle the difficulty.”

When however Eusebius would not be quieted, but only declaimed the more vehemently against Antoninus, Chrysostom requested Paulus, the bishop

of Heraclea, a friend of the accused, to endeavor to reconcile the parties.

Engaged in these proceedings the time for public worship had arrived, and Chrysostom with his bishops went to the church. But scarcely had he pronounced to the people the salutation — peace be unto you — and sat down, when Eusebius again presented himself before Chrysostom, urged upon him a second copy of the accusation, and in a loud voice conjured him by the life of the Emperor and Empress, to take up the matter and call the offender to account.

We may conceive the disturbance which this affair created in the church. Chrysostom, to quiet the congregation and silence the impetuous man, took the writing, but requested one of the bishops to conduct the service for him. He did not feel at the moment in the proper mood, especially to administer the holy supper.

After divine service, Chrysostom assembled all his bishops and also the accuser in the baptistery, and here once more requested the latter to reflect upon his course before the reading of the accusation; for when this is done and the charges are recorded, if he fails to substantiate them, he incurs the punishment which otherwise would fall on the accused. Eusebius, however, persisted in his charges, and averred that he could prove them by witnesses.

They now proceeded to the business. After the paper was read, it was declared by the council that they need investigate only one of the charges, that of bribery, or Simony, since if this was substantiated,

it would be sufficient. Chrysostom now turned to Antoninus. He denied having received any money, and the clergy present who were accused with him denied that they had given him any. These proceedings continued till the afternoon, but as the necessary witnesses could not be produced, Chrysostom terminated the investigations by declaring that he would go to Ephesus in order to bring this matter to a decision.

Yet this did not at present take place. The Emperor declared that the bishop, in the present unquiet state of the times, ought not to leave the city. It is supposed however that the Emperor, in this matter, was influenced by Antoninus, who feared the presence of Chrysostom in Ephesus. Chrysostom went not thither himself, but sent a deputation of three bishops. Arriving there, they naturally asked for the witnesses. Eusebius promised to produce them within three weeks. These passed by and the three following, but the witnesses did not appear. Eusebius was then condemned as a false accuser, deposed from his office, and excluded from church fellowship.

Yet he, as will soon appear, had spoken the truth. This same man, however, who accused Antoninus of corruption, had himself been bribed by him with money to keep back the witnesses and henceforth to preserve silence.

Soon after this Antoninus died, and a violent storm burst forth in the city in reference to the occupancy of the vacant place. Two parties rose up against each other, and corrupt ecclesiastics, who sought after the place, put every thing in commotion. The more

virtuous among them now applied to Chrysostom and urged him to come to Ephesus, that he might, by his authority, terminate the affair. This was a great hardship to the bishop; his health was poor, and the season of the year (it being the latter part of winter) was unfavorable. Still he concluded to go, and after a very difficult journey, in which he experienced a violent storm at sea, he reached the agitated city. He restored quiet to the place by rejecting at once all who had so vehemently sought after the office. He appointed Heraclides of Cyprus, who was well known to him from his having served the church several years under his guidance, and who, in his entire character, was adapted for such a place. All of course were not pleased with this, and the ill-will which they were now obliged to suppress, afterwards burst forth, when, aided by others, they no longer stood in fear of the bishop.

The labors of Chrysostom did not end here. Eusebius, who had been deposed as we have seen, appeared with a request to be again admitted to church fellowship, and offered now to produce witnesses for the truth of his former charges. Thus the matter again had to be taken up, and it was found that six bishops in Asia Minor had actually acquired their offices by the payment of money. They, however, offered such excuses that Chrysostom felt bound to see that the money they had given was restored to them from the estate of Antoninus, while they should be removed from their office and other fit persons be chosen in their place. The individuals deposed did not forget this in him, and we shall soon find them

associated with those by whom Chrysostom was overthrown. Besides these six bishops, seven others, it is related, were removed at this time from their office, yet the accounts we have of this are not very explicit. It is certain, however, that Chrysostom on his journey homeward through Nicomedia, deposed one bishop, Gerontius.

This man having been previously deposed in Milan, then betook himself to the Residence where, through the distinguished patrons he had won, he obtained the bishopric of Nicomedia. Passing for a skilful physician, he was soon enabled, by his professional services both to rich and poor, as also by a happy faculty of making himself agreeable to every one, to gain the favor of the city. When now he was deposed by Chrysostom for thus illegally obtaining his office, the city became greatly disquieted and for a long time would not endure the new bishop Pansophius, whom, as a man of culture and accustomed to the best society, Chrysostom had wisely selected. They finally submitted, but the anger of Gerontius continued to burn, and thus we shall see him also in company with those who sat in judgment on Chrysostom.

For three months was Chrysostom occupied with these matters in Asia Minor. He now returned to the capital where, alas, painful duties also awaited him. Before relating these unpleasant matters, let us, to refresh our spirits, accompany the bishop to his church and learn how he appears before his people after his long absence.

They had impatiently waited for him, and had

deeply regretted his absence especially during the Easter festival, which had been celebrated a few weeks previously;—now they received him with the greater demonstrations of joy. On the following Sabbath, he ascended the pulpit, and, after thanking them for the proofs of their love and making apology for delaying his return till after the festival, he said:—

“ You were desirous of celebrating Easter with me ; what then hinders us from celebrating it again with one another to-day ? Two Easter festivals, do you inquire ? Not but one certainly, yet this one in divers ways. The sun rises many times, but we do not speak of many suns, since it is ever the same sun which rises daily ; and so there is but one passover which we continually celebrate. Unlike the Jews, we are not restricted in regard to time and place. As often as ye eat this bread ye do show the Lord’s death. Thus also do we proclaim it to-day. That day was a festival, and so is to-day, for where the joy of love is, there is a festal day.

“ You say that many were baptized in my absence, but what is the harm ? The grace of God is not the less on that account, nor is any thing wanting to His gift. They were baptized not in my presence but in that of Christ. Is it man then that baptizeth ? Man gives only the hand, but God bestows the blessing. If we have the Emperor’s signature to an ordinance, do we inquire with what pen it is written ? We ask only whether it is the Emperor who affixed his seal. So also here, who am I, and who is this or that man ? We are servants merely — not creators.”

Such a Sabbath in his pulpit and in the midst of his loving flock, was refreshing after the evil times through which he had passed; the more painful was the business upon which he must now enter.

For a considerable time past Severian, the bishop of Gabala in Syria, had resided in Constantinople. There prevailed at that period the hurtful custom which afterwards we occasionally find, that clergymen of high rank were accustomed to spend weeks and months in the Residence away from their churches, partly to enjoy the pleasures of the place and partly, if they possessed gifts, to be heard from the pulpit, and thereby secure reputation and patrons. A short time before, a certain Antiochus from Ptolemais had won great reputation by the mere brilliancy of his discourses, and was thus allured to remain so long that Chrysostom was obliged to give him a hint to return to his office. Severian, who now lived in the Residence, had not so fine a delivery as Antiochus, but his discourses are said to have possessed greater merit, so that he attracted the deeper thinkers, and won also the favor of Chrysostom himself. When the latter departed for Asia Minor, he chose Severian to occupy his pulpit during his absence. This he was very ready to do, but the false man availed himself of this opportunity to scatter in the church the seeds of evil against the bishop. On his return, the better portion of the church laid before him the bitterest complaints concerning this, and urged upon him the necessity of calling the calumniator to account.

Soon after, the Archdeacon Serapion, an imperious

man, made fresh complaints against Severian, in regard to disputes which the latter began with him; and certain expressions which he employed against him in the church created such serious disturbances and violent animosities among the members that Chrysostom ordered him to leave the city. He departed forthwith, but only across the channel to Chalcedon, and from thence he applied to the Empress Eudoxia, whose favor he had succeeded in gaining. She gave ear to him, and importuned the bishop to become reconciled with him. Chrysostom was induced to allow his return, and required publicly in the church all those who had been at variance with the man, also to grant him forgiveness.

“As the union,” he said, “between the head and the body is necessary, so must the church be united with the priest and the ruler; and as the branches are connected with their roots and the rivers with their fountains, so must children be joined to their father and pupils to their teacher.”

“Thus do I begin, and not without reason. I have something to lay before you, and could heartily wish that you would not interrupt me, but grant me your attention, and by obedience manifest your love for me. Obey your teachers, says the apostle, and follow them, for they watch for your souls. I am your father and must counsel my children.”

“I speak,” he continues, “of a matter which may well be discoursed upon in the church. I speak to you of peace. What is more becoming the priest of God than that he should counsel for the peace of the church! As a messenger of peace I come and I pray

you reject him not. Some time past, much that was sad occurred in our church,— there was much strife. Let us forget this, and conquer our animosities. The church has suffered enough ; bring this to an end, and let contention cease, for this is well pleasing to God and to our pious sovereign. If you are inclined to peace, then hear my request, and receive again our brother, the bishop Severian."

When they expressed their assent, he said :—

" I thank you for granting my request, and may God reward you for your love. I called his name and nowhere in the church was there any disturbance ; thus have you brought the true offering of love. The past is now forgotten, and no remembrance of it should remain. We entreat God that He will henceforth preserve the church in peace, and grant to her the highest and everlasting peace in Christ."

We perceive from his words the honesty of his purpose. Severian gave, on the following day, an admirable discourse on peace and forgiveness. But he could not have spoken from a sincere heart ; for when, shortly after this, the contest against the bishop arose, not only the rejected Antiochus, but the recalled Severian was found among his enemies, and the latter was his *bitterest and most malignant accuser*.

XIII.

CHYSOSTOM AND THE EMPRESS EUDOXIA.

EVEN the Empress became at length one of Chrysostom's most determined and dangerous enemies. A fair and gifted, but vain and haughty girl, she, as we have learned already, was made the consort of the young Emperor through the intrigues of the vile Eutropius, and jointly with him and under his teachings, she bore rule in a wholly selfish and unscrupulous manner. After the fall of Eutropius, which was occasioned through her means, and since her husband was wholly dependent upon herself, she thence attained to the summit of power and continued to rule in the manner which she had learned from Eutropius, and which was well suited to her nature. Her will could endure no restraint; her passion was to rule. Honor must be yielded her, and to obtain money she spared no means; "when a rich man died," says a writer of that time, "his property, under the pretence that he had left no children or relatives, was confiscated by imperial order, and thus the surviving orphans were left to suffer in poverty."

It is usually the case that princes and subjects, thus wicked at heart, do not much concern themselves with the precepts of religion and the rites of the church. But it is not always thus. Eudoxia, to human appearance, was a “very devout woman.” She was a zealous upholder of the true faith, and did much for the interests of the church. And not only was she a constant visiter at the house of God, but was often seen in company with the people walking, even by night, in the festive processions to the chapels of the martyrs, and to the places where sacred reliques were found. The clergy were welcome at the court, and many such could speak of her kindness and liberality.

Was she then a hypocrite? This very general expression men are indeed quite ready to adopt, and, because there is truth in it, suppose that they rightly understand the subject, without yet having gained a proper, much less a thorough view of it. Certainly this woman could not have possessed a genuine piety, nay, we may concede that she was destitute of all piety, and yet the question still remains, whether she practised intentional deception in the performance of these pious acts, or whether the power of conscience, and of the religious nature in man may not have disposed her to their performance. When one gives himself up to the power of an evil nature, he feels in his soul the wretchedness of his condition, and would gladly be a different man. Instead, however, of embracing the truth with his whole heart, and thereby rescuing himself from the evil, he lays hold of the rites and formulas in

which truth appears upon the earth, and these he diligently practises in order to silence the claims which his *better* nature makes upon him. We err, therefore, when we regard such persons—and how many such there are! as conscious hypocrites, and yet are they in the deeper sense of the word, liars, and, continuing their practice, must become wholly corrupt. Deceiving themselves, they also deceive others, and sometimes even honorable and sober-minded men. Thus for some time it passed with Chrysostom in reference to Eudoxia. He appears at the first to have had confidence in her, or at least to have hoped that what of truth was cherished in her heart, might yet gain the ascendancy.

He openly spoke of her as the pious Empress, and, indeed, extols her in such terms as were then commonly addressed to distinguished personages. "Among the multitude of the faithful," said he on one occasion, "shines the Empress as the moon in heaven." "Men will call thee blessed," he exclaims at another time, "in that thou receivest the martyrs and buildest up and guardest the church and honor-est the priests and expellest the errors of the hereti-cies."

To us who do not occupy the bishop's place at Constantinople, nor his relation to the imperial court, and whose vision, moreover, has been made more clear by the light of history, such expressions may be offensive, and we could wish that they had not been uttered by Chrysostom in the holy place. . . . It is at least a very perilous thing when such rulers

are praised and lauded by Christian persons. We of course should accept of good ordinances even from those who grant them solely for their own personal benefit. But to bestow adulation upon princes whose intentions we must fear are not honorable and true, we should well be reluctant. Nor must we forget however necessary good laws may be for society, that yet the life does not proceed from external observances, but from the spirit within. And wherever a base mind and evil deeds are apparent, though accompanied with good acts, we are not on account of these to cease testifying with severity against those, and the hidden source from which they spring.

But though Chrysostom may have exceeded the bounds of propriety in addressing these words to the Empress, yet on the other hand he was not silent when any evil came to light, no matter by whom practised. As he once bore witness against the chief minister of the Empress, so also against the Empress herself. And though anticipating what the consequences to himself might be, he yet did not shun them, but spoke boldly in public as in private. Of the truth of this we have evidence in the following.

It had come to his knowledge that the Empress, at the instigation of some ill minded and avaricious men who lived near her, had given up Theognostus, a man of distinction in Constantinople, to the hatred of his enemies, thereby involving him in ruin, and that afterwards she had forcibly deprived his unfortunate widow of a vineyard in the suburbs of the city,

her last possession. On hearing this, he sat down and wrote to her a letter of sharp reproof, in which among other things, he says:—

“ God the author of all existence is himself exalted above all power and authority. All men, however, have a common nature, although in this world some have a superiority to others. Thus God has granted to you the sceptre of an empire, not that you should esteem yourself greater than others, but that you should secure unto all their rights. Neither honor, wealth, nor dominion, nothing, save the observance of the divine commands, conjoined with a pure faith, will avail you in the terrible day of judgment. Do not forget this. Banish not the fear of God from your breast, for well do you know that our breath is in the hands of God. He gives or takes away our mortal years as he pleases. For thus saith the Lord, ‘I kill and I make alive, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.’ We all are dust and ashes. Both princes and subjects we fall as the flower, and as the grass we wither away. . . . Restore, therefore, the vineyard to the unfortunate widow and children of Theognostus. Already has she experienced enough of sorrow. Let this be brought to an end and her distress be quickly relieved.”

This letter was very displeasing to the Empress, and she knew how to set her husband’s mind also against the bishop. Her feelings toward him for some time past were not as at first, but now the alienation was greatly increased. And though the

fires of her anger were still pent up in her bosom, yet Chrysostom was no longer able to effect any thing at the court. On the contrary, he was watched in his words, and whoever could report any thing uttered by him which was thought to reflect upon the Empress or her conduct, was well received at the court. And when there appeared, soon after this, a man who summoned all the enemies of Chrysostom to deadly strife, then was the Empress ready to grant him her assistance and authority. This man was Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria. He is known to us already as the one who was sent for to ordain Chrysostom in his office at Constantinople, but who declined doing so under various false and vain pretences, and was only made to yield when threatened by Eutropius with certain papers containing charges against him. In the fifth section of this work, we have described him as a man of discernment, but of a base mind, and such as he was, will but too plainly appear in his conduct towards Chrysostom. There is hence no necessity for our characterizing his disposition in advance.

We must, however, cast a glance at another individual who had indeed already been resting in the grave for a century and a half, but whose spirit and writings continued to exert a powerful influence in the church. A contest, relating to him and his endeavors, which began in his lifetime and then for a season continued to glow beneath the ashes, but which now broke out anew, was the occasion which brought Theophilus and Chrysostom into conflict. This particular point, however, was dropped by

Theophilus in the course of the controversy, since the downfall of Chrysostom had now become his aim. To understand this portion of history correctly, we need to know something of that controversy, and it is to be hoped that no one will regret having become acquainted with it and with the man who was the occasion of the same. This man was Origen.

XIV.

ORIGEN.

(A VINDICATION OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE IN THE
CHURCH.)

ORIGEN was born in Alexandria, in the year of our Lord 185, and died in the year 254. He had, therefore, lain in the grave 93 years when Chrysostom was born. His father, Leonides, an earnest Christian and a man of learning, himself instructed the child in Christian truth, and had the pleasure of seeing that it was received into a warm and susceptible heart. Thus there was early developed in the child a lively and ardent faith. When during the persecution of Christians under the Emperor Septimius Severus his father was cast into prison, this lad of sixteen years was eager to testify before the pagan authorities that his belief was the same as his father's. Indeed his mother could only restrain him from doing so by concealing his garments, and thus confining him to his house and chamber. On hearing that the sentence of death would be passed upon his father, he sent a few lines to him in prison, entreating him not

to yield to the command of the Emperor through any regard for his wife and children. And when the head of his father had fallen and the property of the family was confiscated, he sought, by diligent study, to fit himself for teaching, that thereby he might maintain himself and support his mother and his six younger brothers and sisters.

This Christian disposition he retained through life. In his later years, and during repeated persecutions, when, by means of painful and exquisite tortures, men sought to extort from him in prison a denial of his faith, he endured with steadfastness, and by means of letters, full of the joy of faith, which he wrote from his prison, he inspired others also with consolation and courage.

All this, however, and much else of the like kind which could be told of him, we find also in other men and women of his time. We here would dwell rather on that which was peculiar to this man. This, as is universally the case, came to him not from without, but was original in his nature. His father perceived it even in the child. Taught by him to read the Bible daily, the child indeed received its statements with confiding trust, yet would make inquiries concerning the same, and oftentimes question would crowd upon question. And when the father stated to him the Christian doctrines, he was not satisfied to receive just what his father gave him. He took notice of discrepancies, he sought after the connection of facts and doctrines, and at times gave utterance to thoughts and doubts which astonished his father. The judicious parent often called his attention to the

fact that human knowledge is limited, and that the essence of Christianity consists not in knowledge but in love, and when the child became too inquisitive he would indeed earnestly reprove him. Yet was the father pleased even with this trait of his gifted son, and, it is said, when the boy was asleep he would kiss the child's breast, remarking,—“Something great is hidden within this breast.”

He was not mistaken. There dwelt in the soul of this man a mighty impulse to penetrate into the nature of things, and to gain for himself a connected view of all divine and human truth—an impulse which, in equal strength, has existed in but few men. To this impulse he surrendered himself and was matured under its guidance.

The place also where he lived and the circumstances of his life were very favorable to him. Alexandria for a long period had been the residence of a greater number of learned men, both Jews and heathen, than could elsewhere scarcely be found. These passed their lives together in the enjoyment of learned intercourse, with the advantage of a large library. Christianity, soon after its introduction, was embraced by men of large culture, and hence the Christian ministers and teachers, in order to stand on equal footing with this class of the community, needed and early secured for themselves the advantages of learning. Thus there arose in the city a theological school in which Christians received instruction preparatory to baptism. While Origen was yet a lad, Clement, a man of distinction and of like spiritual tendencies with Origen, taught in this school,

and, if he did not instruct the boy himself, yet by his writings and by the spirit which he imparted to the school, he exerted an important influence over him. At a later period Origen himself was placed at the head of this school, and in this situation he found leisure to follow out the impulse of his nature.

Yet this very impulse and the results to which it led, were the means by which Origen gave offence to many, and excited a long continued controversy, into which Chrysostom himself was drawn, and which became the occasion of his fall.

But before passing to the narrative of these sad events, we would gain a more thorough knowledge of this remarkable man and of his endeavors.

From what we have heard of Origen's desire for knowledge, we may perhaps have been reminded of the Eunomians, of whom an account is given in the eleventh section. There is in Origen a resemblance to these, and yet, in some respects, a difference. If a child perceived a benevolent Deity in the beauties of spring, he would have rejoiced over him and said: "Good child, thou seest more than many of the wise." Or if a plain unlettered man, under a sense of the glory of Christ, should confess, "Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life; I know that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and if united to Christ he should, in Christ's strength, seek the transformation of his old nature,—of such an one would Origen say: This man is a Christian, and the change which has taken place in him must be wrought in us before we can call ourselves Christians, and without this, however learned in divinity we may be, we are

wholly destitute of that which is indispensable to the Christian.

Unlike the Eunomians, also, Origen did not regard Christianity as a system of doctrines given of God merely to enlighten the human understanding. He did not require that a man, in order to a personal interest in Christianity, should first comprehend the Christian system. He had himself learned that Christianity is an *act* which *God* performed when He made the Word to become flesh, and that the appropriation of the same to ourselves is also an act of life of the moral nature within us,—an apprehension of the glory of Christ, and the consequent renewal of our human nature.

While now most of his contemporaries, and still later Chrysostom himself, would contentedly abide by these simple facts, and were not specially anxious to learn *how* “the blossom’s beauty is born by night,” how Christ came forth from God, how He became man, and how He has again left the world, and is now with the Father,—Origen, on the other hand, had an irrepressible desire to examine into the nature and connection of all things.

It was his firm conviction, that to understand Christianity and the world generally, our nature must first be renewed by Christ. The natural man, possessed of never so much acuteness, is incompetent for this. For the world is upheld not by natural or physical laws merely; its soul is “the word which was in the beginning,” and this is holy. But that which is holy can only be understood by the holy. If now, said Origen, “the Word” has taken up His abode

within me as a quickening power, then I can understand the same and the world which He has made, and shall learn the things of God not simply as outward facts, but endeavor to gain a spiritual apprehension of them.

Therefore he gave himself up to examination and reflection as the work of his life, and with a vast amount of diligence, acuteness, and learning, he wrought out a comprehensive and connected system of doctrine in a series of writings such as until that time had never existed in the Christian church.

It cannot be denied and need not be concealed, that Origen, to say nothing of the manifest errors into which he fell in his investigations, attached too great an importance to knowledge, and, in the consciousness of his superior discernment, often looked down upon and thereby provoked such as rested in a simple faith. Still greater was his error in making that *perfection* to which God would have his children aspire, to consist not in the fear of God but the knowledge of God, not in religion but in theology, not in faith but in science.

This we cannot commend. Whatever the theologian may be or possess more than others, he is not, therefore, as a Christian *more perfect*, nor does he occupy a higher position in the sight of God.

Having described this man thus at length, let us now consider for a moment and inquire,— how we stand or how we wish to stand in relation to him and to his peculiar endeavors? Was he right in wishing that a Christian, or, better still, that the whole body of believers whose minds have been impressed and

renewed by the power of Christian truth, should endeavor to gain a philosophic apprehension of Christianity and of the world in which it lives as its soul? Will we recognize not only a Christian piety but a *Christian science* in the Church of Christ? This is the question which was then under debate.

There were some in his time, and in the following centuries, Chrysostom among others, who said:—Origen has indeed assigned too great a value to knowledge, he has incorrectly regarded it as the perfection of the Christian, with daring wing he has often overpassed the limits of human knowledge, and has advanced many strange and erroneous opinions,—all this we do not justify. But we must approve of the endeavor itself. This indeed is not for all. Many lack both the inclination and the capacity for this. But whoever possesses these let him follow them, let him build up a Christian science, and may God ever grant us those who have the faculty and the desire for this work. Without such men, the church and its individual members would after all languish and die, and the Christian religion become extinct.

But all were not of this opinion. There were many who said: Learning and science should not intrude into the church or be made of any account among Christians. These should rather adhere to a *simple*, as it was said, or a *biblical Christianity*.

Such persons opposed Origen, and hence arose the controversy.

“Simple Christianity,” “a biblical Christianity.”—These words have a good sound, and certainly we cannot highly enough value what they signify when

properly understood. Christianity, so far as it concerns the salvation of *the individual*, is in truth a very simple thing, — Christ by his life and death has made an atonement with God for me. Trusting in this I approach unto God and am graciously received. He lives with me and I with Him, and in virtue of His fellowship I become a new man, and if I persevere, I shall be made pure and holy, and then shall dwell with Him in heaven.

This is simple Christianity, and this each one who has a home in the Christian church can secure. How many persons have shared in this fellowship of the redeemed with God who were yet unable to read, and had never read a word even in the Bible!

When, however, these things become living realities to a man, no matter whether he be a day-laborer who has little time for meditation, or a child in whom the power of reflection is scarcely developed, he will yet form some ideas concerning these things. He will unavoidably form some conception of Christ, of God, of man, of sin, of the atonement, of fellowship with God, of holiness, and heaven. He will also have certain opinions respecting the connection of these subjects. And his conceptions of these divine realities will be brought into comparison with what he sees and hears in the world. He will reveal his views to others, and others will express theirs, and thus the sentiments of both coming into contact will repel or attract one another.

What now follows from this, or rather what has taken place? In each Christian, spontaneously as it were, there has been formed, however meagre it may

be, a doctrinal system of Divine and human things, and each man becomes an Origen in miniature. Now the Christian liveth not for himself alone. And thus in his family, in the church of which he is a member, in the minds of his teachers, there exists a system of doctrine, and the child at first accepts those views as they are imparted unto him.

Those persons also who were opposed to Origen had already a doctrinal system, and not simply to those facts concerning Christ and redemption, but to their *conceptions* of them they gave the name of "*simple Christianity*." This they received from their parents and teachers as a thing ready-made. Thus they supposed it had been from the first, thus it must be handed down to their children and posterity,—and by this the church must abide.

When now Origen appeared with other ideas than they possessed, even with an elaborate doctrinal system, and this began to make its way, they became alarmed and arrayed themselves against him. Many of them, for example, had lived in communities where God was represented to the mind in a human form, with eyes and ears, hands and feet, and having themselves adopted these views, supposed that others of necessity had done the same. As now they conceived of divine things generally in this crude way, it seemed to them that Origen, in thinking and teaching differently, was taking from them Christianity itself.

Others indeed had sufficient discernment to say: We have no more right to cherish views in opposition to Origen than he has in opposition to us. Let not

this question be decided by our creeds nor by tradition. Let a biblical Christianity, let the Bible decide it. Against this, certainly, Origen would not object, and yet was he unable to agree with them. In this, however, he was not without fault, for in the Bible *he* found much which neither they nor we could find in it. His understanding of the Bible was less clear and sober than that of Chrysostom and the friends with whom at Antioch he studied the sacred Scriptures and their interpretation. Origen, instead of interpreting out of the Bible, interpreted many things into it. He even adopted the strange fancy that the Bible has throughout a double sense, the obvious or literal, which all can understand, and another for the learned which contains a deeper meaning.

Setting aside these errors, Origen maintained that the whole of Christian truth is not found in the Bible as a connected scheme of doctrine, so wrought out that we can take it from the Bible as one takes a garment from his wardrobe. God, he said, has given us the truth not as a finished texture but in single threads, which we must first combine,—not as a full-grown tree with branches, leaves, and fruit, but as a mustard grain which is to become a tree under the fostering care of man. In this work I have labored with great diligence and pains. You on the contrary are satisfied, as I cannot be, with the isolated sentences, thoughts, facts, and truths of the Bible. This gives me no understanding of the counsels and ways of God which I seek to know. I will cheerfully let you enjoy your own methods, leave me to pursue mine.

And was not Origen right in this?— We have not all perhaps read what the learned call a systematic theology, but we know at least the catechism, in which is found the substance of the Bible, though not in the biblical form. In this rank, designed as an instructive guide both for teachers and scholars, we find, first, a statement of the doctrine of religion, then of God, and then of creation, of man, of sin, of Christ and redemption, etc., and in this way we have a connected whole. The Bible is not such a *manual* as this. It is a book *for the life*. Drawn from life and possessing life, it is designed to beget and nourish a life in the souls of men. Every part of the Bible was called forth, primarily, by some necessity of the time, and in its character was suited to the then necessity, so almost all the truth in the Scriptures has reference to special cases and circumstances. God in His word instructs us not as a professor from his chair, but by daily intercourse even as parents instruct their children. Hence we do not find a logical system in the Bible as in the catechism, but if procured at all, it must be wrought out of the contents of the Bible by means of analysis, comparison, and reflection on our part. The Bible, for instance, confessedly speaks of the eye and ear, the hands and feet of God. It also declares that God is a spirit—that He is on high and in the world beneath, and not far from every one of us, in whom we live and move and have our being, and that He is above all, and through all, and in us all. How now are we to receive all these opposing representations? Until their differences are adjusted we cannot.

Again, the Apostle Paul in Romans iii. 28, says: Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. James (ii. 24), says: Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Yet in this there is no contradiction of one apostle against another, for what James here asserts corresponds in sense to what Paul says in the second chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. The appearance of contradiction is explained, when we learn what kind of faith each one has in mind, and to what persons each is writing. But in a catechism there should not be this opposition. The contents of the Bible must then first be digested, and this cannot be done without much learning and study. It will thus be seen, that no such "biblical Christianity" as those persons had in view, could settle the controversy between Origen and his opponents.

With all reverence for the Bible, we must still advance one step further. The opposers of the Bible often base their objections to its authenticity, on the ground that its representations do not always coincide with the teachings of science, as, for example, that the sun moves while the earth stands still, and the like; and many friends of the Bible have been made anxious for the same reason. But for this there is no ground whatever, since the Bible was not designed to instruct us in natural science. It is the Divine will that man should arrive at a knowledge of these things only by study and reflection. And, therefore, we who live in the nineteenth century, may be expected to have other and more correct

views on these subjects, than did the men of that time. Thus it is evident that we cannot take every thing directly out of the Bible, ready made to our hands, but that we must discriminate in regard to the object of the Bible, and what we may reasonably expect to find it. It was the desire of Origen to combine the teachings of Divine revelation and the results of human science into one system. Whether he attempted this rightly, is another question, yet the endeavor, at least, is praiseworthy. Others, however, chose to abide, as they said, by a "simple" or a "Biblical Christianity,"—in other words, and as it really lay in their minds,—by the views received from tradition, and commonly entertained, or by the immediately obvious declarations and thoughts of the Bible. But this method we cannot deem correct.

The difference of natures and of spiritual tendency between these men and Origen with his party, was called forth by still another circumstance.

The Old Testament, as is well known, is written in Hebrew. In Egypt, however, those Jews who no longer understood that language, made use of a Greek translation, (the Septuagint,) and this they regarded with as sacred feelings as the other Jews did the Hebrew original. They even held the belief that this translation was made under the influence of the Divine Spirit, and narrate, that seventy Jews each by himself engaged in this work, and that, through Divine direction, their translations agreed to a word. The *Christians* in Egypt, also, when they read the Old Testament in the church or at home,

made use of this version, and, indeed, cherished the same reverential feelings toward it as did the Jews.

Origen, however, who was acquainted with the Hebrew, soon perceived that the Greek version differed in many points from the original text, and that in many passages it had wholly mistaken the true meaning. He also observed that the different copies (printed Bibles there were none as yet), did not perfectly agree, and many times he had felt embarrassed when disputing with the Jews, who threw out against the Christians the reproach, that they neither possessed nor understood the Old Testament correctly.

All this induced him to take in hand the work of improvement, nor did he withdraw again his hand from the plough. With an iron diligence, which won for him the surname of Adamantius, for twenty-seven long years he toiled on in his work, with the intent that posterity at least might be able to read and understand the Old Testament correctly. Aided by wealthy friends, he spared neither money nor pains in the procuring of manuscripts and versions of the Old Testament wherever they might be found. Thus by degrees he gathered together a whole series of translations. One was found by him to his great joy in an old cask, which stood somewhere in the corner of a house, and another of great importance, was also accidentally found among some old books in the house of a Christian lady, where, during a time of persecution, he lived in concealment. He now, with the assistance of seven secretaries, transcribed the Hebrew text and several of the best

Greek translations, side by side, in a book of fifty volumes or rolls, so that one might compare them together, and thus ascertain, as nearly as possible, the true meaning of the Old Testament. We are sad to record that this work (the Hexapla), which was placed in the library of Cæsarea, was burnt, together with many other books, by the Mohammedans in their devastating campaigns.

The opponents of Origen were naturally unable to appreciate such a work. They were satisfied with their version as it was. And when still later, another learned man, Jerome, incited by the labors of Origen, and with help of the same, furnished a new and improved version, and would distribute it among the churches and people, they were greatly dissatisfied, for they saw in this a falsifying of the Bible, and an assault upon the purity of Christianity.

The intentions of these pious people were certainly honorable and good, but—a dreadful *change* had been introduced. Was it Christianity, however, which was changed? or merely the views which men commonly entertained regarding it, or rather, regarding a few declarations and passages of the Christian Scriptures. And now upon which side in fact did the truly Biblical Christianity stand? Was it with those who adhered to a once received and authorized, yet in many respects incorrect version of the Bible, or with those who had an amended translation?

. . . . Perhaps, however, there secretly exists in the minds of some, a difficulty of this kind; they

think, it may be, "if we in the Bible, as it lies before us, do not possess the immediate gift of God, and if the learned have other and more correct views of it than we, then we are dependent for our Christianity upon learning and science, and upon the men who possess these attainments." This they dislike; they wish to have all things as directly from God as others. Then we reply to them,—this cannot be. The Christianity which thou hast, after it has once been given to the world, and has come even unto us, is, indeed, the direct gift of God. It is a matter between thy conscience and thy God. But in very many things connected with Christianity, thou art dependent upon others, even upon the learned, for such is the will and appointment of God. Just consider,—*the apostles* wrote in Greek; but thou dost not understand Greek. Therefore thou couldst not read a word in the Bible had it not been translated. And our translators could not have done this, had they not been men of learning and science. Is this indeed so? and is it thus appointed of God? Then if thou wilt not be dependent on science and learning, but opposest them, thou opposest an ordinance of God. Take good heed where thou wilt find thyself at last. History shows us that this course, whether attended with seeming or real piety, leads mostly to evil, and inevitably to such contests as the following section will bring before us.

XV.

THE ORIGENISTIC CONTROVERSIES.

WE have dwelt the longer upon the subject last occupying our attention because of its importance even for our times. The narrative of the contests arising therefrom will be given with greater brevity, in order that we may speedily arrive at the period when Chrysostom himself becomes involved in them.

1. The attacks which Origen personally received had not their ground simply in the character of his efforts. The reputation he had gradually won was a source of irritation to Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, and made him so jealous that he gladly availed himself of the first opportunity to remove him.

Origen had presided over the theological school in Alexandria for a long period without having received clerical ordination. In a journey, however, which he made to some friendly bishops in Palestine, he was ordained in Cæsarea as presbyter.

This perhaps was not entirely in accordance with ecclesiastical rule. Demetrius eagerly seized upon

it, and on his return removed him from his office as teacher. Nor did he rest here, but after working against him secretly for a time, he called together a council, and with this he excluded him as a heretic from the communion of the church. This created a great seusation, and the whole church took part in the controversy which ensued.

The West, especially the bishop of Rome, took the side of Demetrius. In the East, however, Palestine, Arabia, Phœnicia, and Greece, took part with Origen. And thus taking refuge among his friends, he was enabled to continue his labors and influence in quiet for several years.

2. A century and a half had now elapsed. The loud voice of controversy by degrees had died away. Secretly, however, the writings and the disciples of Origen were at work on the one side, and his opponents on the other. The dissension was not healed.

Just now, in the lifetime of Chrysostom, at the end of the fourth century, it broke out anew. Three men in Jerusalem—John, the bishop of that city, the learned Jerome above mentioned, and the Presbyter Rufinus—began again, after the principles of Origen, to work more powerfully by their teachings and writings.

Jerome prepared a new Latin translation of the Old Testament, and in the preface to the same, expressed in enthusiastic terms his affection for the honored man. Rufinus translated an important work of Origen, and endeavored to circulate it in the West. Around these there gathered a circle of men in Jerusalem who labored with a kindred intent.

The opposite party naturally were now aroused, and first of all Epiphanius, the bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, a man of high repute. We shall soon find him in company with Chrysostom. He went to Jerusalem, and, in accordance with his nature, passionately demanded that the friends of Origen should cease from their efforts and unite in condemning their friend as a heretic, who now for a long time had been resting in his grave. This they were unwilling to do, and violent steps were taken.

The bishop of the city, being of a mild and benevolent disposition, gave up his pulpit on the Sabbath to Epiphanius. The zealous man, making use of this opportunity, expressed himself so strongly and offensively against the friends of Origen, that the bishop sent a servant to the pulpit with the request that he would moderate his tone; but Epiphanius would not be interrupted. When he had finished, the bishop came before the church and, with conciliatory manner, spoke words of peace. But all in vain. Epiphanius once more stormed from the pulpit, and demanded of the bishop a public condemnation of the heretic Origen.

Such was the state of disorder to which things had arrived at Jerusalem. The controversy however was not confined within the walls of the city. The church everywhere was drawn into it. The parties turned to every quarter in order to strengthen themselves by the authority of the most distinguished officers in the church. The bishop of Rome sided with Epiphanius. John turned to Alexandria. The episcopal chair of that place was now occupied by Theophilus, who

had long been known as the friend of Origen. He took the part of John, and sent a messenger for the purpose of establishing peace. Soon after, however, this treacherous man turned about and gave to the controversy a direction which would further his own selfish ends.

3. In the north of Egypt, on the left bank of the Nile, there lived not far from each other, in a lone desert region, two parties of monks. They led in their way an earnest life. Many of them were truly pious men, who gave themselves up to a life of prayer, as also of active labor and industry.

Even here we find again those opposite spiritual tendencies by which the men of that age were divided. One party of these monks, residing in the "Nitrian" desert, consisted of the friends of Origen and his writings. They had more cultivation, and as might be expected, had purer conceptions of Divine things. The monks of the other colony, in the "Scetic" desert, were less cultivated. Like children, they conceived of God as actually possessing a human shape. They explained the words "in the image of God created He man," as having reference even to His corporeal form. Hence these monks often fell into dissensions and controversies with one another.

When now, in the beginning of the year 399, Theophilus, the bishop of Alexandria, would make known, as was then the custom, the precise time of the Easter festival in a letter which, in addition, always contained some spiritual reflections, he chose for his subject the doctrine of the Divine image in man, and

combated, entirely in the spirit of Origen, those rude conceptions of the being and nature of God.

As soon as this letter found its way to the Scetic desert, it created great disquietude among the monks. Yet this received an apparent check one day, when Serapion, the most distinguished of them, declared himself convinced that God could not have a human form. At evening, however, when the monks all assembled had knelt for prayer, there was immediately heard a wailing voice — “Miserable man that I am! They have taken away my God; I cannot pray. On whom shall I depend?” It was the voice of Serapion, who, with the image under which the pious man had commonly conceived of God, seemed to have parted with God himself. The condition of things again changed. A part of the monks, in the greatest excitement, went to Alexandria, and, in presence of the bishop, menaced him as a man who, himself without God, would also deprive others of theirs.

Theophilus became alarmed, and, in order to appease them, cried out at once: “In you I behold the image of God.” And on their requiring him to curse the godless Origen, he acceded also to their request.

It is hardly possible — for a lie did not cost him much — that he formed at this moment the resolution to abandon the party of Origen. Circumstances, however, soon occurred which led this unprincipled man to stand forth as the opponent of Origen.

At the head of the monks who resided in the Nitrian desert and who were friendly to Origen, stood four brothers, Dioscurus, Ammonius, Eusebius, and Euthy-

minus, well known under the name of the “tall brothers.” Theophilus knowing their aptitude for practical business, had been able, after many entreaties, to induce them to enter into the service of the church at Alexandria. Two of them undertook the management of the church property. They soon perceived how unjustifiably the bishop used the property of the church in order to gratify his fondness for building, and lest their consciences might be defiled, they withdrew to their cloisters under the plea, that the confused life of a city did not agree with them. The bishop afterwards learning the true reason, became greatly incensed against them. This was followed by another event. Isidorus, a presbyter of the church in Alexandria, and a friend to Origen, being himself a superintendent of an almshouse, had received of a rich widow a thousand gold pieces, in order to furnish poor females with clothing, and was at the same time requested not to mention it to the bishop, lest the money should perchance get into his hands. The bishop however heard of this, and, to avenge himself, removed Isidorus from his office, through false accusations, and excluded him from the fellowship of the church. The persecuted man fled to his friends in the Nitrian desert, who welcomed him joyfully to their number.

The storm now broke forth. Theophilus assembled a synod of bishops, devoted to himself, but hostile to Origen, pronounced sentence of condemnation against Origen, and put forth an edict forbidding any one henceforth to read his works. This decision was sent to the monks of the Nitrian desert, and

their sanction and obedience were required. When now they could not and would not do this, the bishop accused them of contumacy before the Prefect of Egypt. A troop of armed men, together with some reckless vagrants which Theophilus had stirred up, suddenly attacked the cloisters, took all the plunder they could, and then laid the buildings in ashes. The poor monks, three hundred in number, barely escaped their swords. Eighty of them fled first to Palestine, and to the vicinity of Jerusalem. When, however, Theophilus succeeded in driving them from thence, they embarked on ship-board to seek for shelter with a man from whom they expected with the utmost confidence to receive right and justice. This man was John Chrysostom, the renowned bishop of Constantinople.

4. Soon after their arrival at the capital, they went to him, narrated their sad fate, and implored him to intercede for them. Tears coursed down the cheeks of Chrysostom, while he listened to the story of these hoary-headed, venerable men, and he immediately promised them that he would write concerning the matter to their bishop. As they were extremely destitute, he furnished them a dwelling-place in one of the church buildings, and commended them to the care of one of the wealthy females, who, in such cases, were always ready to aid him. They expressed a desire to participate in the public worship and at the communion, but this was not granted, since the laws of the church did not allow of the reception of one who had been excluded from church fellowship. Besides this, Chrysostom had reason to

be very prudent in his dealings with Theophilus. After inquiring concerning the character of these monks of the Alexandrian ecclesiastics, whom Theophilus for his own purposes always kept at the residence of the Emperor and the court, and receiving from them the very best testimony, he wrote to Theophilus and entreated him, if it were possible, to receive again these unhappy persons.

Instead, however, of a reply, there appeared a deputation of five persons who lodged an accusation against these monks in the imperial court. These now presented to Chrysostom some countercharges against their bishop which filled him with astonishment. He entreated them to withdraw their accusations, but on their persisting and expressing the design of presenting them to the court, the bishop again wrote to Alexandria and made known the posture of affairs. Theophilus, enraged to the highest degree, replied, that "the bishop of Constantinople had nothing to do with matters which concerned him and his subjects." "If I am to be judged," he wrote, "it will be by Egyptian bishops, and not by you who are distant from me seventy-five days' journey."

Chrysostom would now gladly have extricated himself from the whole affair, but was only drawn the more directly into it. The monks applied to the Empress. When one day she visited the church, these eighty men cast themselves down at her feet, presented their complaint, besought an examination, and added the wish that Chrysostom might be appointed judge. Eudoxia was overcome by the scene.

She looked upon these monks as saints. She spoke kindly with them, requested their blessing and prayers, and promised that justice should be done them. Persuaded by her, the Emperor determined to appoint an ecclesiastical court, *under the presidency of Chrysostom, and Theophilus was summoned to appear before the same.*

5. The effect which this message produced upon Theophilus was necessarily fearful. In Egypt, an almost unlimited monarch, he is now an accused man, and that, too, before Chrysostom as his judge. Such a man must have been thoroughly repugnant to Theophilus. Whoever has not learned to regard and honor a man whose life is one of humblest piety and self-sacrificing love,—and this Theophilus could not do, without despising his own thoroughly worldly and selfish life,—he must feel an aversion towards the man, and a hatred if he comes into conflict with him. Hence Theophilus had regarded with great displeasure the call of Chrysostom to the imperial city, and was, as we have seen, compelled to participate in his ordination only by the severest threatenings. Since that time, both the man and his great reputation, had been to him as a thorn in the eye. He now naturally supposed that the course of events in Constantinople, even to his citation before his council, was the work of Chrysostom, and he well knew that a just and thorough investigation of the matter could only prove disastrous to himself. He therefore resolved to forestall the proceedings, to appear not as a defendant, but as a *judge, and to overthrow the bishop of Constantinople.*

The plan of action was soon projected, but the carrying of it out required time. The court, Eudoxia, and through her, the Emperor, must be secured first of all, and the old enemies of the bishop in the capital must be reunited and their hatred kindled anew. He also hoped for accessions from the party which was hostile to Origen.

He first made application to Epiphanius. We have already seen this man in Jerusalem, though not in a very favorable light. Nor is his reputation generally at all enviable, yet, while he merits much of the censure which followed him, we must believe his character to have been better than his reputation. It was his misfortune to have been pushed forward to an elevated position, for which he was unqualified, while in an humbler and more limited sphere, his influence might have been altogether salutary. Though possessed of much learning, he was deficient in judgment. He was not without earnest piety, yet his views regarding divine things were narrow and limited. For several years he had lived among the monks of the Scetic desert, and the conceptions which he had once formed he tenaciously held. In opinions differing from his own, he saw at once a departure from Christianity, and zealously fought against them, and by this zeal he was led to do many foolish things. Yet he was sincere and honest in his intentions. He never warped justice knowingly, and when convinced of his wrong-doing, he desisted without hesitation. Such will he appear to us in his opposition to Chrysostom at Constantinople.

He was induced to go thither by a letter from Theophilus, who would first push him forward, in order that he himself might follow at the right opportunity. In the letter he says :—

“ It is befitting your character who, earlier than ourselves, were engaged in such contests, to help us now that we are in the midst of conflict, and, to this end, to convene all the bishops of the island of Cyprus, and to send Synodical letters to us and to the bishop of Constantinople, as also to others to whom perhaps you will write, that thus, by the unanimous voice of all, Origen himself and his impious heresy may be condemned. For I have heard that these slanderers of the faith, (the banished monks,) fired with new rage for their heresy, have embarked for Constantinople in order to gain, if they can, new proselytes to this sect. . . . Take care, therefore, to inform all the bishops of Isauria, Pamphylia, and the neighboring provinces concerning this matter, in order that we all with one mind, may through the power of Jesus Christ deliver them unto Satan for the destruction of their ungodliness. That our letter may the sooner reach Constantinople, send an experienced ecclesiastic thither as we have done. Above all, we entreat you, let your fervent prayers ascend to God, that in this contest we may win the victory.”

All this was so sanctimonious, and so shrewdly managed, that the aged Epiphanius was deceived. In his zeal for the true faith, he forthwith assembled a numerous council, condemned Origen, and in a

letter entreated Chrysostom to follow his example, that thus heresy might be banished from the world.

Chrysostom stood as far aloof from the rude conceptions of the one party, as from the many rash and erroneous assertions of the other. He maintained that it was the part of madness, because God in condescension to our weakness, speaks in the Bible of His eye and His arm, to conceive of Him as existing in human form. He also opposed the efforts of those who, forgetting that they are men, and can only think as men, would comprehend God and divine things, and express their conceptions in words. But to condemn those who in this way had gone too far, even into error, he could not, and least of all such a man as Origen, whom, with all his errors, he still regarded as a light in the Christian church.

When in this spirit he replied to Epiphanius, the latter, whose suspicions had been aroused by Egyptian influence, saw in him a heretic at once and departed, as formerly to Jerusalem, so now to Constantinople. As if it were already settled that the bishop of the city was heterodox, and therefore had no right to that office, his first steps were marked with violence. Immediately after his arrival, and before entering the city, he went to one of the churches, held public worship there, and illegally ordained one to the office of deacon. The noble Chrysostom, overlooking this, met him respectfully with the whole body of the clergy, and offered him the rooms which had been prepared for him in the

church buildings. These Epiphanius obstinately refused, nor would he have any fellowship with the bishop until he had condemned Origen and the monks. Shortly after this, he convened a number of bishops, partly residents, and partly strangers, that they might subscribe the canons which were enacted in the councils of Alexandria and Cyprus. Although but a part consented to them, yet Epiphanius concluded openly to proclaim in the "Church of the Apostles," where a solemn service was to be held, the sentence of condemnation against Origen, and to produce an accusation against Chrysostom. At this juncture, Chrysostom sent a deacon to him, warning him, "that in a foreign diocese and against all ecclesiastical rule, he had already many times arrogantly exercised rights which did not belong to him, and would do well to beware of this extreme measure, the consequences of which would only revert upon himself." This took effect. He gave up his design, and soon after came fully to his senses. Some of the banished monks went to him, and in a long interview made known to him their cause, which he had hitherto known only from the representations of Epiphanius. He proceeded no further, and shortly afterwards took his departure. He was accompanied to the ship by one of the city clergy, and the last words he spoke to him as he was stepping on board were,— "To you I leave the capital, the court, and — hypocrisy."

The monks had opened his eyes. He perceived that he had been misused in an unrighteous cause,

and the thought of it broke the old man's heart. He died during this journey on shipboard, at the age of 100 years.

Now, in the summer of 403, Theophilus appeared on the arena of strife.

XVI.

THEOPHILUS AGAINST CHRYSOSTOM.

Not as a defendant to stand before the Emperor's tribunal, but as a judge would Theophilus appear. Twenty bishops accompanied him from Egypt. "I go thither," he said when leaving, "to depose the bishop of Constantinople."

During the time that his pioneer, Epiphanius, had been at work, *he* had not been idle. Through his exertions and the efforts of those who were united with him, he had succeeded in gaining the chief personage of the capital. Eudoxia, having forsaken Chrysostom, promised him her assistance, and with this, the prospect of help from the imbecile Emperor was sure. The bitterest enemies of the bishop in Constantinople who were known to Theophilus, were united in a common cause. Among these the most prominent were: that Severian, whom Chrysostom, as previously related, after a violent contest, had so cordially received; Antiochus, whom he once sent from the capital to his vocation, and a certain Acatius, bishop of Berœa, who, as the story goes, when Chrys-

ostom on one occasion did not show him sufficient respect, said, on leaving the metropolis, "I will at some time, cook for him a dish that he will not relish!"

With these were joined a number of those bishops whom Chrysostom had deposed in Asia Minor, particularly Gerontius of Nicomedia. There were also two deacons whom at the very first he had removed from office for the gross crimes of adultery and murder, and a turbulent monk from Syria, Isaac by name, who, by his calumniations of the clergy, had already caused much harm. Several officers of the court also were drawn into the plot, who promised military assistance should it become necessary. Finally, to them were added several court-ladies, three in particular, Marsa, an early friend of Eudoxia, Castricia, and Eugraphia, who had felt injured by the severe remarks of Chrysostom. The latter, especially, could never forget a conversation in which he upbraided her for her singular and improper mode of dress. It was in her house that the meetings of this company were held. When Theophilus was sure of such a force in the capital he first sent over by sea those Egyptian bishops with considerable sums of money, which were supposed to be still necessary. He himself made the journey by land in order to create a public sentiment against the bishop in the capital. He first met with his bishops again in Chalcedon, opposite Constantinople, on the other side of the Straits, at the residence of the bishop Quirinus, who also belonged to the league. Some days after his arrival he crossed over to the city. In the harbor

he was indeed joyfully received by the Egyptian sailors who came hither in a vessel laden with grain, but he met with a very cool reception in the city, since the people had already heard of his designs and were greatly indignant. Often as their bishop had offended them, they yet loved him.

Chrysostom, remaining true to himself, desired to extend to Theophilus all those honors which were due to so distinguished an officer in the church, and hence had caused apartments to be prepared for him and to be placed at his disposal. Theophilus rejected these offers, and stopped at one of the Emperor's houses. Yet, through fear of the people, he resided here but transiently; his abode was over in Chalcedon, and from thence he passed back and forth. In this manner three weeks passed away before the bursting forth of the tempest. Much preparation must yet be made, and particularly the Emperor was to be won. So little at first did the good man surmise what was going on, that he summoned Chrysostom to proceed in the trial of the Egyptian bishop. But the course of events soon turned, for Eudoxia had changed her husband's mind, and now Theophilus proceeded to his work.

In the suburbs of Chalcedon, in a church of the imperial estate called "the Oak," he opened the "*holy*" synod, and convened thirty-six bishops under *his presidency*. The indictment which was presented, contrary to what we should expect, had no reference to a participation in the heresy of Origen. On this subject nothing more was said. Theophilus even extended the promise of forgiveness to those monks

on condition of their making him an apology. There were produced, however, other accusations, even to the number of “seven and forty.” One seeing them, can hardly trust his eyes, and, unless we knew that they proceeded from the hearts and lips of those who were determined to take vengeance on the bishop, the procedure must seem incredible. As it is, many of our readers will be astonished in hearing them. There are men, however, who, when once offended and set upon revenge, have no rest till they have trodden their enemies underfoot, and to reach this end, are not ashamed to use the basest, and, where these fail, the absurdest means.

Listen to the following accusations :—

Chrysostom has called the clergy corrupt, dis-honorable, and worthless men ;

No one knows what he has done with the revenues of the church ;

He neglects the duty of hospitality, yet privately leads the life of a glutton ;

He robes and disrobes himself in the bishop’s seat at church, and eats wafer-cakes there ;

He does not pray before leaving his house to enter the church ;

He makes use of expressions in his sermons which are unbecoming the house of God ;

He encourages in sinners the hope of security by saying, as often as you sin only repent and I will heal you ;

He blasphemes in the church, affirming that Christ was not heard in his prayer, because he did not pray aright ;

He has taken the part of pagans who have done so much injury to Christ;

He encroaches on the jurisdiction of foreign bishops;

He has excited a strife against Severian;

He encourages the people to rebellion, even against the holy synod;

He is guilty of high-treason in preaching against the Empress, etc. etc.

These charges, no less scandalous than silly, need no refutation. Much as we have heard already of the corruption of the court in Constantinople, we are yet astonished that the enemies of the bishop could hope to succeed by such means. They were, however, successful.

On this indictment Chrysostom was cited before the Council. On the morning when this was to take place, there were assembled around their bishop in his residence at Constantinople, nearly forty of his clerical friends belonging to the city and its vicinity. Yet several of his own church officers were absent, among whom, alas, was one of his chief associates, the archdeacon with whom he had long labored. This old man, Arsacius, either intimidated by threats, or bribed by other means, had, to the great grief of the bishop, been won by Theophilus, had drawn others after him, and now had gone to appear in the synod as a witness against the bishop. Those who adhered to him, however, were sincere friends, and on this morning they gathered together in great excitement. They knew that the Emperor stood on the side of Theophilus, they had heard that their

bishop was accused of high treason, and now the report was that his death was intended. Hence they all felt the deepest anxiety.

One who was present at that time, the bishop Palladius, who afterwards wrote the life of Chrysostom, has narrated many things which occurred on this morning. He relates how their beloved and revered friend, even in these gloomy hours, sustained and cheered their spirits by the power of his faith.

“Pray, my brethren,” he said, according to Palladius, “and as you love the Saviour, let no one of you forsake his church on my account. I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. It is plain to be seen that after many afflictions I shall depart from this life. Well do I know what Satan’s intentions are against me, for he can no longer endure my discourses which have become too burdensome for him. I commend you to the mercy of God. Remember me in your prayers.”

As some of them went around weeping, and others through agitation were going to leave the hall, he said:—

“Sit down, my brethren. Do not weep and break my heart. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Remember what I have so often told you,—that this life is but a pilgrimage, in which pleasures and sorrows pass swiftly by. It is all as a market scene; we buy and sell and then depart. Are we better than the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles that we should be immortal in this world?”

One of the bishops replied: “We weep because we are made as orphans, and the church as a widow,

and the holy laws are subverted. We weep for the poor who are now forsaken and for the church which will lose your instruction."

Then Chrysostom, placing the forefinger of his right hand into his left, as he was wont to do in deep meditation, said:—

"Refrain now from speaking further. But as I said to you before, stand fast by your churches! The ministry did not begin with me, and it will not end with me. Moses died, but did not Joshua succeed him? Jeremiah departed, and was not Baruch his successor? Elijah was borne up to heaven, but did not Elisha prophesy? Paul was taken away, but did he not leave Timothy, Titus, and apostles behind him?"

Another who was present then remarked: "If we abide by our churches we shall be obliged to commune with those who passed this unrighteous sentence against you, and also to subscribe to this sentence." Chrysostom answered: "Maintain the communion, that you may not cause a division in the church, but do not subscribe, for I have committed no offence to merit my deposition."

While they were speaking, a deputation from the council entered, consisting of two Egyptian bishops and the secretary of Theophilus. Chrysostom received them calmly and in a manner becoming their rank. The secretary made known his commission by reading aloud the following summons:—

"The holy synod assembled at the Oak, to John.

"We have received accusations against you by which you are charged with a thousand crimes. Ap-

pear therefore, before our tribunal, and bring with you the presbyters Serapion and Tigris, for their presence is necessary."

The assembled clergy gave reply, that Theophilus, in a manner wholly illegal, had usurped jurisdiction in a foreign diocese, that he himself had appealed against such proceedings to the eighth canon of the Nicene Council in a letter to Chrysostom, and unless he would now abide by this, he himself must first answer to the charges which have been brought against him. The synod assembled here with Chrysostom is, in point of numbers and character, as lawful a tribunal as his own.

Chrysostom himself, however, declared that although by no law of right could he recognize the council "at the Oak," yet he would appear before them even as a defendant if only his four declared enemies, Theophilus, Severian, Antiochus, and Acatius were removed from the number of the judges. But until this was done he would never go thither, how many times soever they might summon him.

Notwithstanding several citations he still adhered to this decision. And when a notary from the Emperor appeared with orders for him to obey the summons, he replied that he would not go before the council as it was then constituted.

This was favorable to Theophilus. He speedily called for a decision, and judgment was passed:—

"As John, accused of certain crimes, and conscious of his guilt, refuses to appear, he is now deposed according to the laws of the church. But since the accusations contain an impeachment for high-treason,

the pious Emperor will therefore provide that he be removed from the church though with force, and undergo the punishment of this crime, which does not fall under our cognizance."

This sentence was now conveyed to the Emperor and received at once his sanction. He however did not proceed with the charge of high treason, since both his conscience and the wellgrounded fear of resistance on the part of the people, restrained him from the shedding of blood. For no sooner had the decision of the council become known in the city than the people flocked in the greatest excitement to the palace and church of the bishop, and remained stationed there day and night together. Their bishop should not be taken from them, at least, not until a new and impartial trial had been granted.

What did Chrysostom himself do? With such a state of feeling in the city, he would not, perhaps, have found it difficult with the assistance of the people to have defended himself. But such a man as he, though pleased with this manifestation of sympathy, could not yet make use of it in a forcible resistance of the civil power. Still he did not retreat until something further was done. Regarding his office as intrusted to him by God, he could not abandon it in obedience to the unrighteous judgment until he was compelled to do so by force. Waiting for this, he once more entered his church, and in the presence of the assembled congregation spoke—as he could not help speaking—in a most powerful manner. He foresaw that his fall was certain—that his church must part with him. Yet he knew that

if they both continued in the faith, the cause which bound them together would not perish with him and that they would still remain united in spirit.

"The waves," said he, "run high, a mighty flood approaches, but we fear not being overwhelmed, for we stand upon a rock. Let the sea roar, this rock removes not. Let the billows rise, the ship that carries Jesus does not sink. What need we fear? Is it death? Christ is my life. Is it banishment? The earth is the Lord's. Is it the loss of our possessions? We brought nothing into the world, and we can carry nothing out. I despise the fear of the world, and I scorn its glory. I fear not poverty, and I covet not wealth. I fear not death, and I desire not life except it be for your good. For your good I now speak and entreat you—be of good courage. No one can separate us. What God has joined together man will not put asunder. Though they fight against me, they will not overcome. Though they assault the church—will they wage war with heaven? In contest with men they may hope for victory. But in contest with the church, their hope is vain, for God is stronger than they all. Will ye defy the Lord? The church stands firmer than the heavens. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the gates of hell shall not prevail against that rock on which He has built his church.

"How many tyrants in centuries past, have essayed to overthrow her! How many assaults they have attempted! How many swords they have drawn, how many fires they have kindled! Where are now her enemies? They are forgotten. And

where is the church? She still remains and shines with the greatest splendor for her victories. If the Christians could not be subdued when their number was so small, how much less can their enemies now bring it to pass, when the whole world is filled with the word of Christ. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away.

“ Let nothing that has happened alarm you; but stand calm and firm in the faith. Behold Peter walking on the sea. He sank indeed, yet it was not through the might of the billows, but the weakness of his faith.

“ The late earthquake could not shake down the walls of our city, and should Satan now be able to destroy the church? The church — it is not walls of stone, for the house of our God is the whole body of believers. Behold how many pillars stand there and how firm, not with iron, but through the power of faith. And though only one such stood there it could not be overthrown. Know ye not the words of Christ: Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Will he not then be present with the church — so large in numbers, firm in faith, and united in love? I have a pledge from him — for I rely not upon my own imaginings. I have his note of hand, which is my support, my refuge, and haven, and though the world should rage, to this security I cling. How reads it? “ Lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world.” If Christ be with me, what should I fear? If he is mine, all the powers of earth to me are nothing more than the spider’s web.

"Not this thing or that, but the Lord's will be done. If He wills that I remain, I give Him thanks. If He wills that I go, I give Him thanks. Wherever I am, will I praise him. Be not disquieted, but persevere in prayer. Satan designs to cripple your pious zeal and to check your prayers. I see he will not succeed, for ye have the rather increased in zeal and fervency. To-morrow also we shall still be together in prayer. We shall still be with one another. We are one body, and the body is not separate from the head, nor the head from the body."

"And though we be separated in person, we shall yet be united in love. Death itself cannot separate us. Though my body die, my soul will live and think of you. For you I am ready to die a thousand deaths. Nor need ye thank me for it, for it is my duty. A good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

Finally, he expressed to them the joy he felt in witnessing their strong attachment to him, their indifference to worldly cares, and their fearlessness of the anger of the mighty,—all this would give him comfort and strength in his conflicts. He then concludes with the words, so precious to him,—To God alone be glory for all things.

At noon of the third day after the passing of the sentence, he learned that a troop of soldiers was at hand in order to take him. Being convinced of the duty and necessity of compliance, he sought to leave the church without being observed by the multitude. Succeeding in this, he gave himself up to the leader of the band. He was kept in concealment by the guard during the day through fear of disturbance,

and on the approach of night was borne to the harbor. Here, however, a large number of people had collected together, but to his great joy, all remained quiet. In calm resignation to God he went on board the vessel which, in the latter part of September, 403, bore him across the sea to Prænetus, a commercial town in Bithynia. Here he was to wait until further orders.

A change, however, most unexpectedly took place. After a few days Chrysostom stood again in his pulpit! Rightly does Paul Gerhard sing:—

“ All things Thou hast at Thy command,
Nor ways nor means are wanting Thee.

“ Thy word can no man hinder;
Thine arm will never rest,
When Thou wilt for Thy children
Accomplish what is best.”

But we will not triumph. The Lord seeth not as man seeth. His thoughts are not as our thoughts. Chrysostom stood once more in his pulpit, but only for a brief period, then again to leave it— forever.

Let us now trace the course of events. When the bishop was borne from the city, his enemies, feeling that they had obtained the victory, gave open demonstration of their joy, and conducted themselves in so rude and haughty a manner, that any one, with his eyes open, must have perceived the motives by which they had been actuated. Among other things, Severian, on the following day, ascended the pulpit of the exiled bishop, and poured forth, in most vehement strains, the vindictive feelings of his heart now

intoxicated with joy. Though no one of the charges, he said, had been proved against him, yet the bishop for his very haughtiness, merits all that has befallen him, since all sins are forgiven of God except pride. — By such proceedings the friends of the bishop were naturally exasperated to the highest degree. The city was filled with commotion, and in the streets and market-places were gathered tumultuous crowds who declaimed with utmost severity against the bishops, the synod, and the imperial court. Several also of those who had previously sided with Theophilus, and had even taken part in the council, now publicly declared that they had been deceived, and that they plainly saw where lay the right and the wrong.

The opposite party now became alarmed. Even the Empress and her husband were disturbed in their minds either through fear or the movings of conscience. But when, on the following night, the city was shaken by an earthquake, Eudoxia became so terrified that she instantly sent for her husband, and besought him to issue a command for the recall of the bishop. Scarcely had morning dawned when the messengers hastened away, carrying to Chrysostom, along with the Emperor's command, a letter from the Empress in her own handwriting, in which she says:—

“ Let not your holiness imagine that I knew any thing of what has been done. I am innocent of your blood. Wicked and corrupt men have devised this plot. God, before whom I weep, is witness of my

tears. I cannot forget that by your hands my children were baptized."

After a few days a vessel approached, bringing back the beloved shepherd to his flock. The rejoicing throughout the city was indescribable. The sea was covered with ships, and on the shore stood thousands of men, women, and children, waiting to greet him. The joy that right had triumphed over wickedness was so general, that even the Jewish residents participated in it alike with others. When at length Chrysostom landed at evening, a very long torchlight procession accompanied him on his way. He had determined not to enter again upon his office until his innocence had been recognized by a lawful council, and would have preferred on this account to stop without the city at a country-seat. But this they would not allow,—he must at once enter his church. They would at least hear and receive the benediction from his lips. Even the Emperor urged him to comply with this. So he went into the city, into his church, and into—the bishop's seat.

"What shall I say?" he began. "Blessed be God! The word which I spake on leaving you I now resume, or rather, it has not been absent from my lips. You recollect, perhaps, that I said to you, in the language of Job,—the name of the Lord be praised forever. The circumstances are different, but the praise is the same. When driven away I praised Him; returning home I praise Him. Winter and summer are different, but their end is one—the increase of the field. Blessed be God, who bade me

depart, and hath called me back. Blessed be God, who commanded the storm, and hath restored quietness.

"Let us learn to praise God in all situations. If any thing good has happened, praise Him and the good will remain. If any evil comes, praise Him, and the evil will pass by. Job gave thanks to God both when he was rich and when he became poor. The times were different, but the feelings were the same. The calm does not enervate, nor does the storm depress the mind of the pilot. God be praised, who hath separated me from you and hath restored me to you. Both alike are from a Father's hand."

It was now the desire of Chrysostom that a council should immediately be called to investigate his case. He would appear before it and endeavor to exculpate himself from all the charges. The Emperor gave his ready consent. At this point, Theophilus with the larger part of his friends, made his escape, and when he was invited to come back to the capital, he returned answer, that circumstances would not permit him for the present to leave Alexandria. During the delay which attended these negotiations, Chrysostom passed two months quietly in the service of his church. After this, the posture of things again changed.

The Empress had caused a silver statue to be erected for herself, before the palace of the senate and near the church of St. Sophia. Its consecration was not only celebrated with noisy festivities and divers games and dances, but even idolatrous honors were bestowed upon the image of the Empress as

formerly upon the pagan princes in Rome. This blasphemous custom of flattering the great had found admission into the Christian world, so that pagan writers of that time inquired of the Christians — how can you reproach us for worshipping our idols when you do the same thing to the images of your rulers ?

Chrysostom felt that, however critical was his relation to the court, he must speak against these things publicly in the church. This he did on the anniversary of the martyrdom of John the Baptist. Tidings of it were naturally borne to the Empress by his opponents, who, though silent at this time, had yet not lost their hatred. She was informed that the bishop began his sermon with these words : “ Again Herodias rages, again she dances, again she desires the head of John.” Whether this was a malicious invention of his enemies, or whether it or something similar, occasioned by the history of the festival, was spoken in allusion to Eudoxia, is not determined. Certain it is that the anger of the Empress, which, though repressed, was unchanged, was now enkindled anew. She believed herself perfectly right in opposing the unthankful bishop, and united again with his enemies.

The council which Chrysostom desired was now speedily summoned, but a majority of its members were his enemies. Theophilus, who was urged to be present, came not in person, yet gave directions for its management. The council took no notice of the former charges, but declared that the bishop who had been deposed by an ecclesiastical synod, having

afterwards reinstated himself by means of the secular power, was, in accordance with the rules of the church which he had thus violated, henceforth incapable of filling the clerical office. Arcadius made known this decision to the bishop, who again replied that he would yield only to force. The Emperor then called him from the church and commanded him not to reenter it, but to remain in his own house.

Urged by both parties the Emperor for a long time hesitated. The enemies of the bishop resolved upon extreme measures. Twice in his own house men were seized who, armed with poniards, sought to take his life. On Easter eve, the 16th of April, the church of Chrysostom and the friendly clergy met together, as was the custom, to spend the night in vigils and to greet the first rays of Easter morning. With them were assembled three thousand young Christians, who were to receive baptism.¹ While they were engaged in singing and prayer, armed

¹ In the earlier ages of the Christian church, certain seasons were regarded specially appropriate for the observance of the ordinance of baptism, and of these seasons Easter eve was held to be the most sacred. Hence this period which commemorates our Lord's resurrection from the tomb, came at length and by general consent to be almost exclusively appropriated for the observance of baptism, by which act on the part of the Christian believer is symbolized his death unto sin, and his rising with Christ to newness of life.

In the western church this period was established by ecclesiastical authority as the stated season for baptism, except in cases of necessity. Hence in populous cities, vast multitudes, amounting sometimes, as in the case before us, to thousands, were baptized on this anniversary festival.

The night time seems to have been chosen for the observance of this

troops, without the knowledge of the Emperor, and by whose command is not known, at nine o'clock in the evening broke into the church, rushed upon the choir and the altar, and proceeded to thrust out the assembled church and clergy with such violence, that the font and the vessels of the altar were overturned, and the blood of the wounded mingled with the baptismal waters. The congregation repaired to the halls of a neighboring bath, and the church on the next morning stood empty. As the anger of the Emperor was now feared, an endeavor was made to drive the people back to the church, which resulted in the fresh shedding of blood. Several of the clergy were imprisoned, and the church fled out of the city. But even there force was again employed to disperse them. This took place on the morning of the first Easter-day.

Finally, after some weeks the three bishops, Acacius, Antiochus, and Severian prevailed with the Emperor. They represented to him that quiet could not be restored to the city until the bishop had left it; that, furthermore, he had been condemned by the holy synod; that the Emperor could not wish to be more lenient and holy than the bishops, and that if there was any blame they would receive it on their own heads.

ordinance, in order to impart to this rite a greater degree of solemnity, and perhaps of mystery.

On Easter morn the newly baptized appeared clad in white robes, emblematical of the new life of purity upon which they had entered. These were worn during the week, and were laid aside on the following sabbath, which from this circumstance was called *Dominica in albis*, or White-Sunday. — Trs.

The Emperor, thus persuaded, sent a notary to Chrysostom, with the command for him to leave the episcopal residence. Chrysostom, learning that a guard was in readiness to remove him, went once more to his church and took leave of his clergy in the vestry. He met the deaconesses in the baptistery and urged them not to cease from their works of charity, and to follow his successor, if legally chosen, as they had himself.—I commend you to the mercy of God. Remember me in your prayers—were his last words.

Without returning to the clergy, he went privately out of the church, gave himself up to the guard, by whom he was led to the harbor, and was thence in a small vessel borne across the sea to Bithynia, on the ninth of June, 404.

XVII.

THE ADHERENTS OF CHRYSOSTOM IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

BEFORE we follow the bishop in his exile, we will take a retrospective glance at the capital and the events which there transpired after his removal.

Scarcely had Chrysostom left his church, when a fire broke out in the same, which in a few hours laid it with the neighboring palaces in ashes. His enemies naturally accused his followers, and even himself, of setting the fire. Optatus, the prefect of the city, appointed a trial and called in a large number of men and women, the friends of the bishop, and sought by means of the most cruel tortures to extort a confession from them. Several individuals, and among others, the reader Eutropius, a young ecclesiastic, died under the torture. Olympias, the distinguished friend of Chrysostom, was herself brought before the court. The prefect without further ceremony asked her why she had set fire to the church? She answered, "The life I have led before you ought, I think, to protect me from such a charge. I have built many churches, how then could I set one on

fire?" Optatus then, in allusion to the rumors previously mentioned, scornfully replied: "Yes, we very well know what kind of life you have led." "Then," said Olympias, "let another be judge, and do you become my accuser."

This investigation continued two months, yet it led to no results, since the author of the conflagration was never discovered. Even had the fire originated with one of Chrysostom's many adherents, yet his true friends would not of course be knowing to the fact. Finally the Emperor brought the investigation to an end, and released the accused from their imprisonment.

But this, to the friends of the exile, was not the end of persecution. A new bishop was speedily appointed in his place and the person chosen for this was Arsacius, who for a long time had served as archdeacon with Chrysostom, but afterwards appeared as witness against him in the council at Chalcedon. He lived but seventeen months and was then succeeded by Atticus, who also took part with him at the same council. The friends of Chrysostom felt that they could have no communion with such men and hence assembled for their worship, which was conducted by the friendly clergy, outside of the city, beneath the open sky. A command was then issued for the dispersion of these "Johannites," as they were called, which was effected with the aid of clubs and stones. All such assemblages from that time were prohibited. A similar course was pursued abroad. Several of the Asiatic clergy who would not continue in church fellowship with the

bishops of Canstantinople and Alexandria, were threatened with removal from their office, and with the confiscation of their property. Some who remained steadfast, as Serapion of Heraclea, were sent into exile. Heraclides of Ephesus was detained four years in prison. At Antioch there died just at this time the old friend of Chrysostom, the bishop Flavian. In his place was ordained, by the hands of Severian and his companions, though in a violent manner and in opposition to the plainly declared will of the church, a certain Porphyrius, who, on account of his dissolute life in connection with play actors and singers, was universally despised. In consequence of these things the same disorder prevailed in this church as in Constantinople.

Innocent, the bishop of Rome and one of the most distinguished of his times, who of course knew something of this matter and had also received a letter from Chrysostom himself, was anxious to be heard in the case. But the messengers sent by him were detained on the sea, and when they could not be bribed by the money which was offered them, their papers were taken from them, and they themselves, scattered in different directions, were sent home.

The writers also of that time have not failed to mark the traces of that retributive justice which rules over the earth. The Empress Eudoxia died in the same autumn, the sixth of October, in the pains of childbirth. Quirinus, the bishop of Chalcedon, who during the synod was laid aside through an injury received in his foot, died soon after this, having had

both of his legs amputated. Another of the unjust judges lost his reason, and imagined himself to be continually pursued by wild beasts. The tongue of a third “with which he pronounced the sentence,” became swollen to such a degree that he never again could speak, but wrote on a tablet a confession of his guilt. Still another suffered intolerably from the gout in the finger “with which he wrote the sentence,” etc. Who of us will blame the people of that time for being reminded by such occurrences, of the words of Scripture: God is not mocked.

XVIII.

THE EXILE.

404-407.

CHRYSOSTOM was fifty-seven years old when he went into exile, and he lived in banishment three and a quarter years. This to him was a period of great difficulty and distress. Previous to this, amid all his mental trials arising from the sad occurrences of the year past, his physical wants at least were provided for. But now, though advancing in years and while making fatiguing journeys or residing in inhospitable places, he was yet often deprived of proper nourishment and the most needful attentions, till at length his weak and delicate frame wasted away and sunk under its burdens. Unto the last, however, so far as circumstances would permit, he continued his active labors for the church of Christ, to which he had consecrated, and, with the exception of single hours of depression, had cheerfully devoted his life.

We will now trace the history of these last years of his life.

1. RESIDENCE IN NICEA.

From the capital he was first borne to Nicæa in Bithynia. Here he must tarry four weeks for a decision in regard to his place of banishment. This period of repose after the storms of the last months was of great benefit to him in restoring his impaired health. He had indeed no servant with him to administer to his wants, but the place of one was well supplied by the two soldiers who guarded him. "They take such good care of me," he wrote in a letter, "that I have not needed the service of an attendant since they themselves have performed the duty of a servant."

As one who had found a rich source of consolation, he thus wrote to Olympias, now deeply afflicted, and harassed by the investigations going on in the capital:—

"The more my troubles increase, the greater is my consolation. I have good hope for the future, and even now all things go pleasantly with me, and I sail with favoring breeze. Who could imagine that, in a raging storm, amidst rocks and shallows, with my little bark enveloped in fog and night, it yet should be as well with me as with those who lie in a safe harbor? I am well and happy, and my only source of disquietude is the fear that you are not equally happy."

Here in Nicæa he resumed his labors. He feared that in their anxiety for the church in its stormy con-

flicts, its friends had neglected those who stood without the church, and had forgotten those measures which he had devised for the conversion of the heathen, especially in Phœnicia. He wrote therefore a long letter to the presbyter Constantius in Antioch, to whom he had intrusted the execution of these plans at that place, in which he says:—

“ I exhort you as I have always done, however severely the tempests may rage, not to omit doing your part of the work which you have undertaken. The difficult circumstances must not make you negligent. The higher the seas run the closer does the true seaman cling to the helm. The more dangerous the disease, the more attentively does the physician watch the sick man. The difficulty of the times cannot excuse us if we let our hands fall. When Paul lay in the jail at Philippi and could do no more, he still exercised his soul in prayer.”

He charges him always to send a minute account of the progress of the cause, how many houses of worship are erected yearly, how many preachers appointed, etc. etc.

In the neighborhood of Nicæa there lived a recluse, one of that singular class of hermits who completely immured themselves in caves, with the exception of a little opening through which they were able to converse and to receive their food. Chrysostom sought him out, and perceiving that, aside from this mistake of his, he was a pious and intelligent man, he strove to convince him that he could serve God in a more acceptable manner by laboring for the heathen. His

suit was effectual. The man left his cell, went to Antioch, and was there set apart for the missionary service in Phœnicia.

In the beginning of July intelligence came from Constantinople that the town of Cucusus, (now Coscau,) on the borders of Isauria, Cilicia, and Armenia, was fixed upon as the place of banishment. This was a heavy stroke both for him and his friends. The place was known to be in a remote and desolate region, where the summers were very hot and the winters, on account of the neighboring high mountains, were extremely cold. To reside there was also unsafe on account of the wild Isaurians who frequently invaded that region and laid it waste by fire and pillage. Chrysostom received this intelligence with trembling, and his spirits sunk in despondency. We have a letter written by him at this time to the Deaconess Theodora, in the capital, in which he expressed himself in a very unusual manner.

“Cease not,” he writes, “to reproach my friends, that they, so many and powerful, have done no better for me. A condemned criminal would not be sent to so distant and desolate a region, yet I, a weak old man, must go among the wild Isaurians.”

In this he did his friends injustice. They had tried to do what they could, but the hatred of Eudoxia was too strong for them. Of the different places proposed, she succeeded in having this place fixed upon for him. His mind, however, soon returned to its usual calm state of resignation to God, and before receiving an answer from his friends, he thus wrote to Olympias:—

“ Trouble no one further on account of the place. It is already well. My friends were kindly disposed, but could effect nothing. God be praised for all things! Thus will I ever speak, let what will happen to me.”

2. JOURNEY TO CÆSAREA AND BEYOND.

On the fourth of July he left Nicæa and passed first through Phrygia, Galatia, and Cappadocia to Cæsarea, a distance of about three hundred and seventy miles. It was a toilsome journey and attended with much suffering. The heat of the sun was intense. The roads leading over the mountains were extremely rugged, nor at the different stopping places were there to be found houses of entertainment or any means of accommodation and comfort. In the midst of the journey, which occupied a month and a half, he was attacked with a severe tertian ague, so that on finally reaching Cæsarea, he seemed, as he states, nearer dead than alive.

In his journey he was greatly refreshed by the general sympathy which, in spite of the hostile feelings of some of the clergy who were incensed against him, he found among the Christian population. Hosts of men and women from different places came to meet him and wept to see the venerable bishop on his tedious journey. The caravans of tradesmen on meeting him and learning who he was, came to a halt and testified the interest they felt in him.

“ I write,” he says in a letter to Olympias, “ to in-

form you that there are many who mourn with me. It is a great consolation when one is not obliged to say with the Psalmist, ‘I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.’”

Yet he complained very bitterly of the hardships he endured and of the condition in which he found himself on reaching Cæsarea.

“The bearer of this letter, although he saw me but a moment or two, may most fittingly say that I am wholly worn out,—a thousand times dead. I was unable to speak with him, so weak had I become in consequence of the protracted fever, in which I have been forced to journey day and night, through the heat, and in want of sleep, food, and attention. I have suffered greater hardships than the culprits in the mines. I have here found a haven at last, but this cannot repair the injury. Yet I breathe again, and get pure water to drink, and am no longer obliged to eat petrified or mouldy bread, nor bathe in broken vessels, and can again keep my bed during night.”

An additional comfort to him was the affection with which he was received in Cæsarea. Pharetrius, the bishop of the city, a cowardly and falsehearted man, kept himself indeed aloof. Chrysostom on his journey met with persons who saluted him in the name of their bishop, and gave him assurance that he longed to embrace him. When however he arrived at the city he saw nothing of the bishop’s embrace, and a dwelling-place was assigned him in a very remote part of the city. But many of the Christians

of all ranks came to him the more cordially in order to supply his wants, and among these, the principals of the rhetorical schools are particularly mentioned. Chrysostom, however, chiefly extols the physicians who had aided him in his sickness by their skill, and still more, he says, by their love. One of them offered to accompany him the rest of his journey, in order to furnish him service when needed.

When his strength and spirits began to amend, as he had still to travel one hundred and forty miles to Cucusus, he proposed to continue his journey. At this time news was received that great numbers of Isaurian robbers had invaded the province of Cæsarea, had already set on fire a large village in the vicinity, and had threatened the city itself. The garrison of the city immediately started to meet them, yet as Chrysostom was dissuaded from leaving the city, he concluded to remain a while longer.

Early the next morning, however, he was awakened by a violent uproar before his house. A crowd of frantic monks from the city and environs had besieged the house and, incited probably by Pharetrius, required him to leave the city, threatening, unless he yielded compliance, to set his house on fire. For a time they were pacified by the assurance that as soon as the travelling became safe he would depart. Yet all this was to no purpose, since, on the next day, they returned, and Chrysostom must, under the burning heat of noon, ascend a litter and commence his journey.

When he was out of the city, to his great joy he met with the servants of Seleucia, a woman of distinction, who informed him and his guides, that in an

estate belonging to their mistress, not far distant, they could conceal themselves in safety, that all things were made ready for his reception, and that the steward with his peasants, in case of necessity, would defend them against the monks. This kind offer was gladly accepted.

But this aid was of short continuance. The matter became known in the city, and at the instigation, probably, of Pharetrius, Seleucia was menaced and intimidated. She herself caused the rumor to be spread that the Isaurians were coming. Some one rushed into Chrysostom's chamber at midnight with the cry, depart hence, for the Isaurians are close upon us. He quickly dressed himself, a mule was brought, and the flight was commenced. There was no moon, and the night was extremely dark. The way was narrow, rocky, and mountainous. They did not dare to light their torches through fear of the Isaurians. The mule stumbled and fell with Chrysostom. "I had nearly lost my life," he writes, "and could hardly raise myself up. Euethius (one of his attendants) took me by the hand, and thus I helped myself along, led, or rather drawn by him." Still, he says in another letter, "I have found more security in these forests than in your cities, where yet law and order should prevail." And again he writes — "I feared no one so much as the bishops, a few of them excepted."

3. RESIDENCE IN CUCUSUS.

In the middle of August, seventy days after leaving Constantinople, he arrived at Cucusus. This place was small and of mean appearance, and its situation augured to him nothing very favorable for the winter. Still he was glad to attain repose at last, and was very happy in all the sympathy which he here received.

A certain Dioscurus, with whom Chrysostom was formerly acquainted, had already sent to him while at Cæsarea a slave with the request that he would take up his abode with him. On reaching Cucusus, he found the house prepared for him, having been made strong and tight for the winter. Dioscurus himself had left in order that the bishop might have the whole house at his disposal. Several stewards in the neighborhood had received directions from their lords at Constantinople who had possessions here, to receive the bishop at their homes. Chrysostom, however, could not well do otherwise than to occupy the house of Dioscurus.

Here at his reception he met with a spirited old lady, Sabiniana. We know not whether she was one of his deaconesses from Constantinople or from his previous charge in Antioch. This faithful woman had made the long journey thither in less time than the bishop. She was already there on his arrival, and for some time she attended him and ministered to his wants.

It is a pleasure also to state, that the bishop of this

city had not been led astray in his opinion of Chrysostom. Adelphius gave him a cordial welcome, and even urged him to preach occasionally from his own pulpit to the church of Cucusus. To this request, however, Chrysostom could not, of course, assent.

In a joyful and contented mood he now writes to his friends:—

“With my host I am always in strife. It is impossible for me to accept of all his favors. Sopater also, the governor of the province, has shown me greater kindness than I could have expected from a father.”

He requests his friends not to think of changing his residence. “I dread journeying more than any place of banishment. I have at heart,” he says, “only one thing—write to me often.” He himself was not remiss in this respect. A multitude of letters which he wrote to his friends in the capital and other places, partly to comfort the afflicted and distressed, and partly to animate them in their labors, are still extant. As soon as he had become settled in some degree, his activity again commenced.

Olympias, on account of the absence of Chrysostom, the deposition of many faithful clergy, and the concessions and apostasy of still others, seeing also the church in the hands of basest men, and falsehood to have become triumphant, appears for a time to have been disheartened, and in this mood to have written to her friend.

In a long letter, he answered her, in part, as follows:—

"However critical and sad the condition of the church may be,—and this cannot be denied,—yet with my eye fixed on the Ruler of the Universe, I do not give up all hope. His ways, which indeed are not as our ways, are often different from what we short-sighted creatures should expect. Yet He says at last—thus far and no further. But He does not do this at the first rising of the storm. It is God's manner to let men have at first their own will and way, so that they themselves would seem to be as gods, and whoever is not steadfast in faith becomes disheartened. But when the distress waxes great, He then reveals His almighty arm."

"I entreat you then, Olympias, give not yourself up to despondency. There is but one thing to be dreaded, namely, sin. I have never ceased to say that all things else, whether persecution, banishment, imprisonment, or torture are mere trifles. These all pass away. Remember what Paul says—the things which are seen are temporal; they pass by like the rushing waters. What the prophet says holds true of all that is fair, and all that is sad upon the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The wind passeth over it and it is gone. The same man of God also says, Fear not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool. Be not disturbed at any thing that now takes place. Cease to call upon this one or that for help. Rely not upon human aid which is but a shadow. But cease not to call upon God to whom thou be-

longest, and thou wilt experience his aid. His favors are greater than our expectations, for, as the apostle says, He does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Speaking afterwards to the complaint of the unfaithfulness and apostasy of so many, he says:—

"Have then such things now happened for the first time, and have not the unfortunate obtained deliverance? Did not Peter deny his Lord, and all his disciples forsake Him, so that He stood bound before the tribunal alone? And have not the fallen been raised, and the erring been restored? Your grief is just. Yet as we should not hopelessly grieve over our own sins, so our grief for others should have its limits. It should not so overcome us as to lead us also to sin against God."

To his friend Palladius who was likewise suffering in exile, he writes:—

"As regards myself, I need no consolation. The cause for which I suffer is sufficient consolation to me. I bewail, however, the sad state of the churches, and I urge you all to help by your prayers, that the church may be rescued from destruction, and that peace may again be granted her. Pray without ceasing, for by your removal from office to a life of retirement, you now have the more leisure to continue in prayer."

Pæanius, a man of rank, having sought much but in vain to assist him, in a letter makes complaint of this, yet concludes in the favorite words of Chrysostom — God be praised for all things. Chrysostom

expresses to him the joy he felt at this evidence of his faith, and says:—

“ Cease not to utter these words, and teach all others to do the same. For this is a death blow to Satan, and to us in times of necessity is the richest source of comfort and joy. By it Job was sustained while the tempter was struck down. Whenever I speak these words, all clouds of sorrow vanish away.”

In another strain he was obliged to write to the presbyters, Theophilus and Sallust in Constantinople. They, indeed, were connected with those members who separated from the hostile party. Yet, though adhering to the Johannites, the former through fear had ceased to preach, and the latter seldom attended their meetings.

“ What I have heard concerning you, has greatly grieved me. If the report be a calumny, let me be quickly informed of it. But if it be true, then make haste and reform. Your reward will be great, if at such a time you show yourselves courageous. But certainly you must expect a heavy judgment, if you indolently neglect your duty. Know you not what the Lord said of him who hid his talent in the earth? The flock, my own dear church, faithfully and daily keeps together for the service of God, and the shepherds are absent! How will you obtain forgiveness, if, when others are persecuted and banished, you at home do not stand by the church?”

One of his presbyters, Domitian, to whom he had intrusted the care of the poor, especially among the

widows of his church, informed him that his funds were insufficient, and that those under his care were suffering from want. Chrysostom then wrote to a wealthy friend, Valentine, requesting his speedy assistance, reminds him of a small sum which he still claimed from him, and asks him to send it to Domitian for the object specified.

We thus see that Chrysostom, though four hundred and seventy miles distant, continued to act as the sympathizing pastor of the church in the metropolis. But his labors were not less abundant for the heathen tribes, whose evangelization originated in the efforts of his missionaries. He sought also to open new paths to those regions which he, as a bishop, had been unable to reach.

Through the activity of his presbyter, Elpidius, the heathen on Mount Amanus were converted, and churches and cloisters were built among them. Chrysostom on receiving information that money was wanting, commended the support of this mission to his friend Agapetus, a man of property.

When Unilas, the efficient bishop among the Goths, was taken away by death, they applied to Constantinople for a successor. Chrysostom knowing that the management of the church was in such corrupt hands, was extremely anxious over this matter, and labored in suitable ways to procure the sending thither of an upright and earnest man.

In Phœnicia, the cause still remained in a critical state. He was therefore specially active in imparting to the missionaries there consolation and aid.

“Let not the present disturbances,” he writes to

them, “ induce you to abandon your posts. As the difficulties become greater, labor the more earnestly that the fair structure which you have erected may not be left unfinished. How many difficulties you have already surmounted, how great advantages you have already secured. That you may not leave, I will see that garments, shoes, and provisions are sent to you. If you again want any thing, only send me word and I will assist you. Think of the apostles of the Lord; what must have been their necessities and sufferings during their whole lives.”

For these objects he had means even now at his command. Olympias was not the only one who was ever ready to give. Many gifts which were intended for his own use, he applied to the mission.

“ Think it not ill in me,” he wrote to Carteria, an opulent widow in Antioch, “ that I have returned your gift. It was gratefully received, but at present I do not need it. If ever I am in want you will see that with utmost assurance I shall turn to you and ask. For you must know that I regard your property as my own, and shall draw therefrom when I have need, but I cannot consent to take when it is not needed.”

From Diogenes, a man of distinction, he received through the hands of a presbyter, Phraates, a considerable sum of money. He affirmed that he did not need it. But when the presbyter persisted that he must not bear it home again, Chrysostom persuaded him to go to Phœnicia, and to give the money with himself to the mission there.

He sent another presbyter, Gerontius, to the same

mission, and in writing to him, says: It is much better for you to go thither than to stay at home. Thou canst even there fast, and watch, and pray, but at home thou canst not sow and plant, and reap for God's kingdom.

On hearing that a severe persecution was commenced against the clergy in Phœnicia, several of whom were put to death, and many others cruelly treated, he immediately applied to Antioch, to a presbyter there, Rufinus, whom he knew to be a whole man, and requested him to go at once to Phœnicia and stand by the distressed missionaries. "They need there," he writes, "a man of courage, of discretion, of your spirit, Rufinus."

In Persia the Christians had suffered severe persecutions for forty years. At this time Maruthus, the able bishop of Martyropolis in Mesopotamia had succeeded by means of skilfully conducted negotiations between Arcadius and the Persian Emperor, in securing the influence of the latter to put a check for the present to the persecutions. The more cruel these were, and the more earnest the intention to extirpate Christianity—for hundreds of Christians and ministers were put to death, and in part after the most shocking manner—the greater must have been the interest which Chrysostom felt in Maruthas and his cause. Yet this man had been won by his enemies in Constantinople, and at the second council had subscribed the sentence against him.

In such a case it must appear what one is most concerned about—whether his own loved self, which has been injured, or the cause of God.

Before reaching Cucusus, Chrysostom had sent to Olympias two letters for Maruthas. Soon after his arrival he wrote to her that she might use every means to explain his cause to this bishop. “If you succeed, inquire of him what he has accomplished in Persia by his endeavors. Let me know if he has received my letters. If he chooses to reply I shall be happy, if he will not, he will at least tell you how far he has advanced in his undertakings. I have taken extreme pains to have a personal interview with him. Cease not to do him all kind offices, and strive to draw him out of the gulf. I need him for the cause in Persia.”

4. FLIGHT TO ARABISSUS.

Occupied in this manner, he passed the last part of summer and the autumn of the year 404. The mild air of this season in that region had confirmed his health. But now followed a year and a half—two winters with their icy cold and the intervening summer with its scorching heat, which put every thing back again, and brought him near to death. We will hear his own account of this. In a letter to Olympias, in the beginning of spring, 405, he says:—

“I write to you from the brink of the grave, for in the last few months I found myself no better but was worse than dead. I had only life enough to be sensible of sufferings from every quarter. It was for me a perpetual night. I was constantly confined to my bed, and notwithstanding all the precautions used, I

was unable to protect myself from the disastrous effects of the cold. Though I kept fires burning, and, notwithstanding the vile smoke, shut myself up in a little chamber and loaded myself with a great number of coverings, and never crossed the threshold, I yet suffered continually from sickness, constant vomiting, headache, and long, sleepless nights. Since spring has opened and the air has changed, my complaints have abated, and I am now recovering."

But soon came the scorching heat of summer, and he was forced to make fresh lamentations. "My health is violently assailed. There is nothing to be bought here, and physicians, medicine, and the most necessary means of life are wanting. The heat of summer and the consequent bad air, are no less afflictive than the cold of winter. In addition to this we are in constant fear of the incursions of the Isaurians."

These threatened the place the whole summer, and had so overspread the country, that to the greatest grief of Chrysostom, his correspondence, heretofore so actively held with his friends in Constantinople, Antioch, and Phœnicia, was now interrupted. In the depth of the succeeding winter, when all was snow and ice, their devastations had become so severe that the people round about were forced to abandon their towns and hamlets and seek their shelter in the forests and caves. "They lay waste with fire," writes Chrysostom, "and whom they do not kill they drag away with them as slaves." Even the inhabitants of Cucusus forsook their town, and

Chrysostom himself was obliged to journey days and nights together through snow and ice in order to reach a small fortress called Arabissus, forty-five miles distant. Here with a large body of men who had flocked together, among whom malignant diseases broke out and famine was threatening, Chrysostom led a sorrowful life.

"A short time since," he writes, "I was obliged, in the severest cold to pass from one place to another and hide myself in clefts and caves, being driven hither and thither on all sides by the Isaurians. Finally I fled to Arabissus, hoping in this town, or rather in its castle to find safety. My situation here is harder to be endured than imprisonment. Death is daily at our doors, for the barbarians have encompassed us about, and with so large a number of us in this little place we must soon fear a famine." In another he adds: "The fear of the Isaurians makes every one seek safety in flight. The towns are nothing but walls and roofs; the ravines and forests have become cities. The inhabitants of Armenia are like the lions and leopards who find their safety only in deserts. We daily change our habitations, like the Nomades or Scythians; and often little children, hastily removed by night in the excessively cold weather, are left dead in the snow."

During this period, however, the feeling of resignation did not leave him, and at times his spirits were elevated to a Christian cheerfulness.

"We should strive," he writes to a friend, "after one thing only, to reach with a cheerful conscience

our common father-land. This is the only sure and imperishable good." To another he says : " This is the nature of love ; it is not vanquished under a multitude of sufferings, but like the flame it rises through them all, and only with the greater intensity."

THEODOTUS AND CONSTANTIUS.

Our readers will be interested in the account we shall now give of the relation which even in this time of distress was formed between Chrysostom and a young man from Constantinople.

Theodotus, the son of a wealthy and eminent officer in the capital, had resolved, under the influence probably of the discourses, life, and sufferings of the bishop, to become an ecclesiastic. His father, having cherished other plans for him, had for a long time opposed the execution of his purpose. When at last with reluctance he gave up his opposition, the youth proceeded at once to Cucusus, in order to fit himself for his chosen work under the direction of the exile. He came to him just in the beginning of the unfortunate winter of 405-6. Chrysostom was soon convinced that the delicate health of the young man could not endure the climate and mode of life in his place of banishment. Having persuaded him to return, he delivered him up to the charge of a deacon in the capital, urging him to use his influence with the father, who was still unreconciled, while he himself wrote to him on sending back the presents which his son had brought for him, but of which,

however, he had no need. This took effect, and the heart of the father was won back again to his child.

With this young man he maintained a constant and friendly correspondence. Soon after his return he thus wrote:—

“ Through the power of love, it seems as though you were still present with me, and I hope I shall yet have the pleasure of seeing your face again. Though the winter has driven you away from Armenia, you still have an abode in my heart. If the war with the Isaurians had not obstructed the intercourse, you would have received a multitude of letters, but though my tongue must keep silence, my heart has often spoken with you. Write to me often how you prosper in body and mind. Give your whole time to the reading of the Scriptures, so far as your eyes will permit, in order that you may become familiar with the letter of God’s word, and I will afterwards guide you into its spirit.”

“ I am concerned,” he again writes, “ only in regard to the bad state of your eyes. Take good care of them. Consult with physicians concerning them and do all in your power. As to the trials which befall you, you must, as I have often told you, rejoice over them, and I rejoice with you, knowing what fruit of patience is secured thereby. Let nothing which happens trouble you. There is but one evil. Every thing else, if you continue watchful and sober, will be even for your gain, and will secure to you the unspeakable gifts of heaven in rich abundance. I should be glad to have you with me, but the heat of summer here would be too much for you.

The unhealthy air, I fear, would injure your eyes. Take good care of them, and when you write inform me, though there be but a slight improvement."

Many persons, as this young man, resorted to Chrysostom from different quarters. Indeed his renown, as a writer remarks, was greater in exile than as a bishop. Thus, Constantius, a presbyter from Antioch, resided with him for a long period, and probably at different times. He had been driven away from Antioch by the hostile party, and thus writes to his mother from Cucusus :—

" . . . The mother that bears a true love for her children is seen in this, that she, to put her son in the way of duty, drives him from home, endures the separation patiently and even thanks him for going away. You have raised yourself above the dominion of nature in requiring me to exchange the city for the wilderness, the security of repose for a life among the Isaurians that I might not be compelled to do any thing dishonorable. Not only therefore do I thank you for my birth, but much more for the education you have given me, by which you have shown yourself to be a true mother." In a consolatory letter addressed to her amid the disturbances at Antioch, he says : " I beg you to remember that there is only one calamity, sin. Power, reputation, glory, among men are all vanity. The way to heaven passes through the depths of suffering. My intercourse with the holy bishop has refreshed me not a little, so that I have become almost another man, and do not feel that I am living in a strange place. Such

a fulness of spiritual blessings surrounds me, and such a wealth exalts my soul, that I cease not to thank God continually."

6. THE LAST WRITINGS OF CHRYSOSTOM.

Before passing to the section which is to speak of the end of our pious friend, we may with propriety give some account of his last writings. During the mournful year and a half of which the preceding sections have treated, he still continued to labor for his church in Constantinople. On the accession of Atticus as bishop in the place of Arsacius, the persecution against the Johannites broke out with fresh violence. It was occasioned by the fact that the oppressed party who endured the first attacks with lively enthusiasm, even now, after the voice of the aged bishop had been silent for months and almost for years, remained steadfast in feeling and action. In consequence of this persecution, the bishop sat down and wrote for them two treatises, or tracts as they might be called, in order to strengthen their faith.

From the multitude of his writings, and from his comments which we possess, on the greater part of the Bible, we have not given many extracts, as they would fail to excite a popular interest. We shall, however, be interested in reading the last work which has come to us from his pen, in the evening of his life.

In the shorter treatise he develops the truth, that *no one can injure him who does not injure himself.*

This proposition savors of the wisdom of the ancient Greeks, who placed all happiness in the power of man's freewill, and supposed that man was sufficient unto himself. This, of course, is not inculcated in this treatise, yet its design is to operate upon the will—a will, however, which rests on a Christian foundation. This is demanded by the aim which Chrysostom had before him, besides it results directly and wholly from the peculiarity of his Christian nature. He speaks in this particular case at the close of life, as he had often spoken before. On this account many members of our churches will find something in Chrysostom which they do not approve. They coincide in their views more nearly with one who was born a short time after him, and whose influence began to be felt when he had closed his earthly career, and has since been felt most powerfully throughout the western church, while Chrysostom and his writings for centuries have been among us as if forgotten. I refer to the great Augustine, who could so thankfully ascribe all things to the *grace* of God by which alone *he* had been rescued, that he was unable to believe in a human will on which it depends, whether one chooses to be possessed of this grace or not. He maintained that after man had fallen through Adam, it must depend *solely* on God whether he be restored. Whom God will save, to him help is granted, while all others are lost. Chrysostom was not of this opinion. It was his deep and firm conviction that without the will of man, nothing is effected. The grace and gift of God

are certain to us and are indispensable,—but what they effect in us, and whether, and how far, they benefit one, and how far another,—*this* depends on the fidelity or unfaithfulness of the human will. Hence he laid much stress upon the will, both in himself and in others, during his life. If he went too far in this direction we yet will not deny that his contemporary on the other hand, did not go far enough. We see in these two persons the same Christianity apprehended, yet in a manner conformable to their individual characters and more or less defectively.

In the treatise mentioned, he starts from the principle that nothing can harm me which does not injure my proper being. But the proper being of man is not physical health and strength, which sickness may destroy, nor honor and a good name, which calumny may take from us, nor liberty, for one can put me in chains, nor life simply, for then I must fear death. It consists rather in the disposition of mind, in a genuine faith, and this no one, not even Satan, can take from me if I *will* but hold it fast.

How, then, inquires Chrysostom, can you charge your opponents with injuring this or that one of our friends, since *those* have not done it, but the blame thereof lies with *these*?

After describing the unshaken firmness of Paul, he brings forward the objection — true, but Paul was one of the elect of Christ,—to which he replies — was not Judas also called and endowed with great gifts? But calling, choosing, and endowments avail

not. Judas fell, notwithstanding, because his will consented to evil, while Paul remained firm through the integrity of his will.

Hence Scripture history, he says, presents to us a long series of those who have fallen and of those who have been crowned from Adam unto Christ, in order to show us that all the terror of the world cannot injure him who remains firm in his will, and that no provisions of grace will help him who is not watchful and sober.

Why, he asks, did the house of the foolish man in the parable fall, Matt. vii. 26; on account of the descending torrents? The same beat also upon the wise man's house. It fell, rather, because the sand on which it was built had no stability.

The chosen people of Israel had received the most numerous proofs of the Divine care in the wilderness, had witnessed the most extraordinary miracles, and yet they turned back to idolatry. The heathen of Nineveh humbled themselves in penitence at the simple word of the prophet. Whence came this? Our answer is, these were men of upright will, and only a slight incentive from without was needed to effect their reformation.

He refers them to the victory of the three men in the fiery furnace at Babylon. Do you say that God helped them? But if you do your part, the help of God assuredly will not be wanting. Nor do I wonder so much at their remaining in the fire unhurt, as at the triumph they achieved before going into the fire. For they stood forth as victors at the moment when they said to the king: "Our God is able to

deliver us from the burning fiery furnace. But if he chooses not to do it, be it known unto you that we will not serve thy gods."

He then concludes: since we can gather this knowledge and abundant examples of a like nature from the rich treasure of the Scriptures, let us firmly adhere to the truth that no evil of the times, nor power of tyranny can furnish an excuse for us if we err and fall. No one can harm him who wrongs not himself.

These words, coming from the lips of one whom many sought to injure, but who, through the strength of his will resting in God, received no harm, have, aside from the truth they contain, a special value. Yet not less important is the truth which he utters in the second treatise.

This bears the title: To those who have taken offence at the tribulation of the faithful and the defection of the unfaithful.

It is evident from this treatise, that among the adherents of Chrysostom, there must have been some who, from the occurrences they beheld in the church of the East, were in danger of being led astray as to their reliance on the providence of God, without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground. Nor can this surprise us. In order to explain and to apologize for the gloomy doubts which tempted these poor people, we need not have recourse to the refined ideas of the Greeks. They are made sufficiently intelligible from the atrocities committed, "the abomination of desolation," which stood triumphant and insolent in the holy place. It was the

commencement, or rather a mighty stride forward upon the way, which has led to the goal before which we now stand, as before an enigma in the government of the Head of the Church.

For more than a thousand years the work of Christ has disappeared from all the regions of the East, where our Saviour and his apostles labored, and the gilded crescent gleams where once the simple cross gathered around itself the churches of Christ. We wish not to affirm that had Theophilus, Eudoxia, and their confederates been defeated, and Chrysostom and his friends had kept the field, and the influence of their spirit had continued, the East had been preserved to the church. The circumstances, however, with which we have become acquainted in the foregoing narrative, necessarily had their influence.

If to the query, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in the field? from whence then hath it tares? the reply, an enemy hath done this, has at any time held good since the establishment of the church, it certainly does so here. What must have been the feelings of those Christians when they saw the league of ungodly men unmasking themselves, coming forth as victors, and successfully carrying out their plans? At the head of the church, in the three principal Sees of the East, were such men as Theophilus in Alexandria, Atticus in Constantinople, and Porphyrius in Antioch, and by these the clerical offices around them were filled with creatures like themselves. Men of earnest purpose and influence were deprived of their office, and wherever a church

wished to meet for justice and truth, it was violently trampled, as it were, underfoot. If, then, the righteous inquired, what will become of the cause of Christ among us if these things continue, where is the Lord's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," if He does not now reveal his arm of deliverance,—if they made these inquiries, who can censure them? We still make the same and can do so with a deeper emphasis, for we know what has become of the church there — it is extinct.

Chrysostom, who was intimately connected with these times and occurrences, having heard of the anxious inquiries of the faithful, gave reply. He could answer them calmly, for a doubt of this kind had never entered the mind of this great man. God be praised for all things, was his abiding motto; and that which enabled him to be thus firm and unmoved by the doubts of others, we find described in the last writing which we have from his hand. What then is his reply?

Ye are sick, my poor friends, in Constantinople. Ye let your minds be carried away by an impulse which a man in health knows nothing of, much less obeys. You wish to fathom what is incomprehensible — the ways of Providence, the purposes of God. Observe the sound mind of Paul. He was a man of large genius and acute intellect, who well knew how to think, and he had looked upon things which were obscure. Yet what did he do when he saw the Jews rejected, the Gentiles brought in through their rejection, and salvation prepared for both through the mercy of God? He stood in silence and thought —

O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor?

The apostle knew the narrow limits of our vision, and the poverty of the most affluent mind, and hence he says: If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. He well understood that since we here below cannot survey the whole, we cannot rightly judge the separate parts of God's work—that “we only know in part and prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.” And so great did the difference seem to him between these two states, that he adds by way of comparison: “When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things.” It is presumption and madness to seek to penetrate into that which is closed against us. Listen to the apostle, saying, Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Behold, how deep a *silence* he requires! The apostle speaks thus not to take away your freewill,—far from it; but that you, in view of the ways of God, should be as uncomplaining as the lump of clay under the hand of the potter. You should not oppose nor speculate, but with the feeling of *trust* should give yourselves up as the clay is given up to the potter.

Can we not do this? But we who are Christians

know that the Lord is love, not passionate indeed, yet ardent, unspeakable, unquenchable love. Has He not declared this in word and proved it in act? It is the manner of him who loves, to try repeatedly and in diverse ways better to express the love he feels, and yet the greatness of his love baffles his powers of description. God also has done thus in the Bible. When some once sighed as ye do now—“The Lord has forgotten us, the Lord has forsaken us,” He replies:“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?” He compares his love with the love of a mother, which is the greatest on earth. But even this is not the measure of his love, for he adds—“yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” And again—“Like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear him.”

Heaven is high above the earth—is it not higher than all else? But from thence He takes the figure—“As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.” The east and the west are separated from each other at remotest limits, but “as far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.”

“With Him is plenteous redemption;” and to show its fulness, He says, in Isaiah lv. 89—“My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

In Hosea xi. 8, immediately after uttering a threat

He adds, but “mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.” So it is with him who loves. He cannot bear to have pained a loved one even by a word, and therefore he says: My heart is turned within me.

After reminding his friends of the *words* in which God assures us of his love, Chrysostom reviews with them the *acts* of God in which He reveals His love, and finally comes to the manifestation of the Redeemer. “Who is there that must not gaze with astonishment at the unspeakable compassion of God, when he considers how God for his ungrateful servants gave up his only begotten Son to death, even the ignominious death of the vilest malefactor. And this He suffered for your sakes, and in pity to you, that the power of sin and death might be destroyed, the curse of guilt removed, and the door of heaven opened, and also that you should learn patience and not be offended at the terrors of the world. He has endured all things—mockery, insult, slander, persecution, and death itself—and has obtained the victory over them, that henceforth we should not fear any of these things. And now, sitting on the right hand of power in heaven, He is ready to impart the gift of His Spirit.

“Why, now, do you sit down and brood over these dark occurrences? When you lie quietly under the physician’s knife, and are lanced or cauterized without requiring of him an account where and how deep and for what length of time he shall operate, while the result of this is yet uncertain, how can you desire to question our Lord, whose wisdom is unerring, or

to censure His way, while yet we stand at the entrance of it. Only wait! If an ignorant person should see the refiner cast the gold into the fire, and bury it with ashes, he would, unless he waited, imagine the precious metal to be lost. If one who was born and grew up on the ocean, should on the land observe how the husbandman casts his grain, which he has hitherto kept so carefully, into the ground and covers it with earth, he would, unless he waited, condemn the foolish peasant. Yet which of these is at fault, and on whose side is the folly? And if the countryman waits through the autumn and entire winter, and is not made solicitous by the storms and tempests, frosts and ice, so it becomes you to wait for *His* results, whose field is the world, and whose harvest are the souls of all His creatures. You complain that the church is scattered and bitterly afflicted, her noblest members persecuted and scourged, and that the pastors are banished to remotest regions. But only wait. Do not look at things as they now are, but forward to what shall grow out of them. Consider that Israel, without the prospect of the resurrection, were obliged to keep silence and resign themselves to patience, however often the counsels of Jehovah were marvellous in their eyes. Must not we, then, who know that the dead shall rise again, take shame to ourselves if our faith in *Him* wavers, who is excellent in working? Remember Abraham, who indulged not in gloomy forebodings, but raised himself above human weakness, and trusted all things to the power and wisdom of God. That was indeed a dark counsel when God required the sacrifice of his

son : Can God require this bloody human sacrifice ? require of a father the sacrifice of his own beloved child ? Can He require the son on whose life depends the fulfilment of all his promises ? Thus he might have queried, yet he questioned nothing of all this, but he believed and trusted where he could not see, for he knew that he was trusting the Lord Almighty. Had Abraham indulged in gloomy apprehensions as ye do now, it had gone ill with him ; but not doing this, he received all things which were promised him.

"And this we likewise shall receive here or hereafter. I ask not how ? for the ways I leave to God. If the enigma is explained in this world, I shall thank God, but if not, I shall wait till the life to come. Superlative good is found alone in heaven. All below is unstable and changeable. Here is our pilgrimage, but there is our fatherland and home."

Chrysostom then calls the attention of his friends to the separate traces of good which had already grown out of those otherwise dark events. Many a one who heretofore had been seemingly indifferent, and wholly lukewarm and stupid, was reawakened to a pious zeal. Many also who formerly seemed to take delight only in the theatre and the race-course, returned with good confessions again to the church. Divine worship in many places was no longer as it had been, but again exhibited warmth, zeal, and life ; and where it could no more be held in the house of God, the different churches, even without the guidance of pastors, converted the hills, forests, and deserts into temples of praise. Truly, he says,

“the time of the martyrs has come again. Men, women, and even youth once more have endured tortures rather than yield consent to wrong. And on the other hand, the hearts of many have become manifest. O how many who a few years since wore the mask of piety and appeared to be somewhat, now stand forth in their own nakedness. The times have been as a furnace, the chaff is consumed, the dross is separated, but *the precious metal has only become the more glorious.*”

“O the cross,” he then says, “the cross of Christ. It has still the same power and efficacy as four hundred years ago. To the Jews, indeed, it remains a stumbling-block, and to the heathen foolishness, but to them that are called, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Why then will we mourn and sigh? With the apostle let us rejoice in the cross. It brings a blessing even here; what will it do in that day? When all the generations of earth shall be assembled before him, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, the billows roar, and the angel host descend, and when the prophets and apostles and all the saints shall be gathered together, then the Lord will come bearing the *radiant cross*. The sun will grow dim, and the moon lose its brightness when ‘the sign of the Son of Man’ shall appear. O the glory of sufferings! O the splendor of the cross! Thou wilt stand in heaven outshining the stars.”

7. BANISHMENT TO PITYUS, AND DEATH OF CHRYSOSTOM.

We now draw near his end. Both by word and deed he has evinced to us his preparedness for his final summons.

Having survived the sufferings of the winter 405-6, he found himself subsequently more comfortable. He had by degrees learned suitably to protect himself against the climate of this region. The want of a bath, which formerly seemed to him indispensable, and over whose absence he at first made frequent complaint, he afterwards supposed operated beneficially. His friends provided him with various means for the alleviation, as they hoped, of his complaints. From Syncletia he received a stomach plaster which greatly mitigated the sufferings he usually experienced in the winter. He also praises a costly balsam "which Carteria had prepared for him with her own hands, and had put up so carefully that, notwithstanding the great distance, it was perfectly fresh when it reached him." In a cheerful and spirited letter to Olympias, whom, when it was possible, he ever sought to console with good tidings, he thus, in the winter of 407, writes:—

"Give yourself no uneasiness on account of the winter, my stomach complaint, or the Isaurians. The winter, indeed, is such as might be expected in Armenia, yet having adopted suitable precautions for self-protection, it has not much injured my health. I keep a fire burning, enclose the room I live in on

all sides, cover myself up with a multitude of clothes, and do not go out. This is indeed truly irksome, but it must be borne, for, so sure as I expose myself to the air, I have to suffer for it." He then urges her in turn to take good care of her health, and to consult with skilful physicians, and gently reproves her for desiring her release from this world. "It is not in vain that we suffer, and suffer long, since it brings forth its fruit. Job was glorified through his sufferings. Timothy suffered, and Paul, who even raised the dead, did not check his malady, but gave him up to its purifying efficacy. Paul himself, indeed, entreated the Lord thrice that he might be delivered from the thorn in his flesh, but when his request was not granted, and he had learned the benefits of suffering, he was not only resigned, but he rejoiced in what had happened. Imagine not, when obliged to stay at home and keep your bed, that you are living to no purpose. If, however, our separation makes you desponding, then wait for its end."

He then speaks as if he expected to be released again from exile, and that he should live to see a happy issue to the mournful strifes in the church.

The ground of this hope was in the efforts put forth by the bishop of Rome and the united clergy of the West, with the countenance also of Honorius, their Emperor. These interceded for him; Honorius wrote to his brother an earnest and severe letter, and the Roman bishop insisted on a general council for the investigation and adjustment of the matter. A monk, also, who lived by himself at Mount Sinai,

but who enjoyed great repute, the excellent and enlightened Nilus, who deserved to be more widely known, declared openly and boldly for Chrysostom. When the Emperor Arcadius, alarmed at the violent storms and earthquakes which had visited the city, sent, in his anxiety, to Nilus that he might offer supplications for the capital, he returned this answer:—

“ How can you hope to see Constantinople delivered from earthquakes and fires from heaven while so many crimes are there committed, and vice reigns with impunity, and the pillar of the church, the light of truth, the messenger of Christ, the bishop John, is banished from the place! How can you hope that I should pray for a city stricken with the wrath of God, while the profligacy with which the laws are trampled under foot surpasses all conception.”

But all these efforts not only proved unavailing, but rather incensed the dominant party, to whom also the renown which the bishop still enjoyed in his exile gave offence. The decision was formed in Constantinople to remove Chrysostom still further off, and away from all connection with the Christian world.

In the summer of 407 he appears to have had an account of this plan, and in a letter to the bishop of Rome—probably the last which he wrote—in which he thanks him for his endeavors, he thus speaks:—

“ If I should be banished to a still more remote and desolate region, I shall carry with me no small consolation in your love.”

Soon after this, in August, notice came that he should be removed to the town of Pityus, on the

north-east coast of the Black Sea, at the foot of Mount Caucasus, in a desolate region at the extreme limits of the Roman Empire. Two Roman soldiers made their appearance and led him away. One of them treated him kindly, the other was coarse and brutal, and augmented the hardship of his lot, according to orders which he professed to have received.

It was plain to be foreseen that the bishop could not endure the toilsome journey, and we therefore conjecture that their real design was to rid him from the earth.

Chrysostom did not reach Pityus. His delicate and worn-out frame sank under the hardships of the journey. He was only borne about six miles beyond Comana (the modern Alcaons), in the province of Pontus. There he passed the night of the thirteenth of September, in the church of St. Basiliscus. He seems to have had some presentiment of the nearness of death. In a vision of the night, the saint of the church appeared to him and said: be of good comfort, my brother, to-morrow we shall be together.

On the following morning, he entreated for permission to tarry there till noon, but in vain. After dragging himself along for more than an hour, the soldiers, seeing he could go no further, carried him back to the church. Happy in reaching it once more, he desired to partake of the holy supper, and, changing his garments for this purpose, he distributed his travelling dress and what else he had among those who were present. After receiving the sacrament, he engaged in prayer, and while breathing his last, con-

cluded with the words which had so often given him joy in life — Thanks be to God for all things.

This was on the fourteenth of September, 407. Soon after, his body was laid to rest near the remains of St. Basiliscus.

What fortune did his name, his cause, and his church subsequently meet with? In the eyes of the world even, his enemies were guilty of wrongdoing. The injustice, however, which he suffered, which even the Emperor had done him, was afterwards atoned for by the Emperor's son. Arcadius died eight months after Chrysostom. Thirty years later, his son, Theodosius II. and the bishop Proclus brought the remains of Chrysostom, with the greatest honors, from Asia Minor to Constantinople. On the twenty-seventh of January, 438, Theodosius knelt down on his coffin and entreated forgiveness of the sainted spirit for the injustice which his parents, and especially his mother, had done him. His remains were interred in the "Church of the Apostles."¹ The Johannites were now reconciled and returned again to the communion of the church. At a later period, Chrysostom was received by the Catholic church into the number of the "saints," and from that time onward, the twenty-seventh of January, has borne his name in our calendar.

¹ Subsequently his bones were removed to Rome, and, about two centuries since, were deposited by Pope Urban VIII., in a chapel of St. Peter's, which still bears the name of Chrysostom. — TRS.

XIX.

CHRYSOSTOM AS A PULPIT ORATOR.

It is proper now to inquire, by what means Chrysostom became an orator, whose fame has continued undiminished for so many centuries. And it must be answered, in the first place, that he was indebted for this preëminence most of all to natural endowments. He was made for public speaking. He possessed by nature a strong, penetrating, comprehensive intellect, a quick invention, an exhaustless imagination, a rich vein of wit, great self-possession and depth of feeling, a keen faculty of observation and a practical turn of mind,—in a word, all the highest and most indispensable qualities of a good orator. And though described by his enemies as proud, repulsive, dark, and unsympathizing, he was nevertheless thoroughly noble, inspired with zeal for the good of men, and perfectly fearless wherever the cause of truth and right was to be defended.

Moreover, these rare gifts of nature received the best culture. From early youth his mother, the gentle and devout *Anthusa*, infused into his mind the purest

principles of virtue and piety, and kindled his upright and benevolent spirit into a flame of zeal for the holy cause of Christianity. He was from childhood very familiar with the Scriptures, and through his own experience, aided by the invaluable teaching of *Diodorus*, obtained a deep understanding of their import.

His free, ingenuous mind was fortified still further against narrowness of view by study of the ancients, and was at the same time enriched with treasures of knowledge. He was no less fortunate in having for his teacher in rhetoric *Libanius*, the most distinguished sophist of his time. The principles of rhetorical art which this master enforced, gave him a true insight into the properties of genuine eloquence, and formed his taste as a speaker, while his own religious convictions were strong enough to make him perceive and avoid the formal sophistries of his teacher.

A knowledge of men is one of the most necessary qualities of an orator. Chrysostom obtained this in two ways. During a residence of six years among the monks, he acquired by prayer, by study of the Holy Scriptures and of himself, that deep knowledge of man which is the foundation of all true knowledge of men. And when afterwards he was called to an important office in one of the largest churches of the East, and witnessed the human strifes of high and low, it was easy for him, as his homilies on the statues testify, to trace back moral evils to their root and source, as well as to show in each case what was needed for their cure. If at a later period, in Constantinople, the great plainness of his discourses gave offence, this sprang from no want of knowledge

in respect to the world or mankind, but was rather the fruit of his own ascetic strictness, of his burning zeal for the holy cause of religion, and — as we may not deny — of a certain proud sense of his spiritual superiority and official dignity.

For his ability, therefore, in public speaking, Chrysostom owed as much to nature and the extremely favorable circumstances of his life, even to ripe manhood, as to his own moral, religious, and scientific efforts. He was in all respects predestinated to be a distinguished orator.

What, then, were his characteristics as an orator? In reply to this question it will be necessary to consider the contents as well as the style and delivery of his discourses. For Chrysostom would not deserve the fame of having been the first orator of the ancient church, unless his pulpit addresses had been distinguished for excellence both of matter and of manner.

The eminent preachers, who lived before his time, had, for the most part, fallen into the error of seeking to interpret the Bible allegorically. Nor was Chrysostom, a diligent student of Origen, able to set himself entirely free from this prevailing tendency of the age. Yet after Origen he was the first preacher who interpreted the Scriptures without doing violence to their meaning, and who employed their contents mainly for useful practical purposes. Although his exegesis is in many particulars defective, it holds fast this practical character, and constantly aims to make the Word of God edify his people, and to place in a clear light the innumerable, interesting relations of that word to the heart and life of man.

Again, the Christian orators who preceded him had been addicted to curious metaphysical disquisitions, and to fierce, ever returning controversies with pagans, Jews, and heretics, so called. Chrysostom was not wholly free from these defects; yet scarcely one of his predecessors so fully subordinated the subtlety of current dogmatic opinions to the interests of true piety and practical morality. He spared no labor in striving to exhibit those speculative topics, which he was compelled to bring into the pulpit, in a manner so clear, lifelike, and interwoven with practical reflections, that his constant object, the moral improvement and Christian sanctification of those intrusted to his care, might not be defeated.

Hence the relation of his eloquence to moral science. The latter owes much to Chrysostom. It had not, to be sure, been wholly neglected by previous orators, several of whom, in the midst of violent doctrinal conflicts, had devoted special attention to morals. Nor were the ethical principles inculcated by Chrysostom purely Christian. Monachism, celibacy, asceticism, penance, were all extolled by him. He says, "the philosophy of monks outshines the sun." But if we look away from these fruits of his peculiar education — from his praises of monkish asceticism, his inclination to the stoic philosophy, his severity in judging the conduct of others, and the like — Chrysostom then stands before us as that preacher of the fourth century, who announced the principles of Christian morality most purely and fully, most thoroughly and aptly, most emphatically and perseveringly. He not only delivered homilies

upon a multitude of single virtues, but all his discourses are pervaded with the doctrines of morality. And they were generally exhibited in a manner suited to win and move his hearers. For no orator understood the human heart in itself, and men of all classes and conditions, better than Chrysostom.

A considerable part, therefore, of the reputation for eloquence, which Chrysostom has enjoyed in every age, is manifestly due to the contents of his discourses, to his on the whole excellent method of interpretation, to his for the most part comprehensive and pure doctrinal views, and to the dignity, power, and impressiveness of his moral teachings.

But the style of his sermons has contributed yet more, perhaps, to the fame of Chrysostom. For this was eminently popular. He knew how to let himself gracefully down to the capacity of an uncultivated audience, and to speak with a perspicuity, simplicity, and naturalness, which fully explain, why not merely the higher classes, but also the middle and lower, heard him preach with so much delight and admiration. Chrysostom strove with the greatest earnestness to avoid all obscurity of language. He always chose the most familiar words, and did not hesitate to use the phrases of common life, when it was necessary for greater clearness of expression. And this great perspicuity appeared not in the choice of words alone, but also in the course of thought as well. His explanations of Scripture, and his doctrinal discussions evince peculiar skill and sagacity in elucidating dark points.

One of his distinguishing qualities, a *copia verbo-*

rum, aided him greatly in making his discourses popular and perspicuous. His treasure of words and phrases was inexhaustible, and language streamed from his lips like a full, rich flood. Yet with this luxurious fulness of speech, were united at the same time, force, fire, and vivacity. His language while expounding the Scripture, is thoughtful and temperate; but when he speaks against vices or sins, against pagans, Jews, or heretics, it rises into vehemence, it smites with great power at the hearts of his audience, it seizes upon the spirit, and overcomes all the obstacles which error, madness, and sin, would raise in its path. No one can employ more touching, impassioned, vigorous, or penetrating words than Chrysostom. Hence he delays in simple exposition no longer than seems indispensable for the general understanding of his chosen theme or passage of Scripture. He then proceeds directly to make use of his explanation for impressing the mind and heart of his audience. To accomplish this single, ultimate object, he exerts the whole strength of his intellect, the exhaustless power of his invention, and the full compass of his abundant knowledge. No wonder, therefore, that the words of Chrysostom were often greeted by his audience with extraordinary applause. It was common for his hearers in the progress of a discourse, to shout for joy, to clap their hands, to wave their handkerchiefs in token of approval, and to express their assent aloud in words. Indeed he was ever sure of having the hearts of his audience under his control while speaking.

He also knew how to enchain the spirits of a mul-

titude by the elevation of his thoughts and style, by the sublime and glorious flight with which he rose on the wings of eloquence to the contemplation of divine things. Yet he was far from maintaining throughout a whole address this lofty strain. It was rather one of his excellences and a clear proof of his deep knowledge of the art of speaking, that great variety of style characterized his sermons. The tender and the vigorous, the serious and the lively, the lofty and the familiar, entreaty and reproof, warning and consolation, were so skilfully and eloquently intermingled, that the heart of his hearer was assailed on all sides, and every faculty of his soul visited by an appeal. The effect of all this was increased by the readiness with which Chrysostom laid hold of passing events in church or state, in city or parish, in families or among individuals, and even of that which occurred in the house of God while he was speaking, for the purpose of illustrating or enforcing his theme.

And finally, a remarkable exuberance of images, examples, and comparisons, contributed much to the variety of style, the perspicuity, and the impressiveness which characterize the discourses of Chrysostom.

Having thus specified his chief excellences as a pulpit orator, it is now proper to indicate some of his defects. For while these must be ascribed in a great measure to his over-active imagination, to his long residence with ascetic monks, to the prevalent style of preaching in his day, and to the excessive frequency of his pulpit efforts, they are nevertheless defects, and should be referred to by way of caution

and warning. Owing to his ignorance of the Hebrew text and to the influence of popular but erroneous doctrines, he sometimes misinterprets the Word of God. His definitions, moreover, are frequently inaccurate, and his moral teachings often wrong. However free in spirit, Chrysostom was still a child of his time, and partook of many of its errors. Nor was his style perfect. In seeking to be understood he too often repeats the same thought, multiplies explanatory remarks, or refutes imaginary objections. To the same category belong his too great fulness of detail in description and his excessive multiplication of examples and similitudes. Besides, in order to place the subject under examination in the most striking and favorable light, he does not hesitate to magnify unduly its importance, and to deprecate for the time being other virtues or men, as the case may be. He is also inclined to exaggerate whatever is really wonderful or sublime, and, on the other hand, to indulge in mere play upon the sound or meaning of words. And finally, by pursuing his allegories too far, he often renders them obscure and weak.

These are the greatest defects in the discourses of Chrysostom. And they are sufficiently important in themselves to furnish instruction and warning, while yet their shadow is by no means deep enough to darken essentially the radiant light of his eloquence.

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CP





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